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IRELAND AND SAINT PATRICK

IRELAND
AND
SAINT PATRICK

BY
WILLIAM BULLEN MORRIS
OF THE ORATORY OF ST. PHILIP NERI

*Alone amongst the Northern nations, Ireland adhered to the
Ancient Faith*

LORD MACAULAY

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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN it is said that in the history of Christendom there is nothing like the unchanging and sovereign connection of St. Patrick with Ireland, this need not imply that his influence has been more successful or more salutary than that of other Saints. For literary purposes it is enough that it should be peculiar; for it is that which is singular which arouses interest and curiosity: we do not want to be reminded of common things however wonderful. Although the following Essays have been written at long intervals, the moral is the same throughout; and just because there is a moral, and a line of argument, a certain *ex parte* tone is inevitable, and this, I fear, will prejudice some readers against the conclusions. In the writings of Catholics about the Saints this is unavoidable, for we believe that they are the accredited intermediaries between heaven and earth—the greatest, because the only absolute and unquestionable benefactors of mankind. The noblest and the most unselfish human agent

can rise no higher than his cause. If he is mistaken, his good intentions will not avail to save himself, and others from the inherent evil which saps the foundations of all things human ; whereas, the mistakes of the Saints are only accidents, and do not affect the substance of that Divine Truth of which they are at once the organs and representatives. We expect to find in the lives and influence of the Saints an image of that consistency : that unity in variety which reveals the co-operation of God. If it were not so they would not be Saints, but mere men like their fellows, the slaves of their surroundings.

It is the fashion with those who have no faith in virtues higher than their own, to accuse the biographers of the Saints of painting an imaginary perfection for the purpose of edification. Saints' lives, we are told, must be fictions, because the characters they reveal are as perfect as those of romance ; as if God was not able to do as much as the imagination of man can invent. They are false, it is said, because they do not reveal the weak side of human nature—they tell us little or nothing about faults ; but what can we do, when, as so often happened, their contemporaries could not discover their imperfections, although from the very fact that they were consistent Christians they were in perpetual conflict with the world, and exposed to its fiercest criticisms.

No men are so consistent as the Saints, for none are so absolutely under the dominion of the fixed and all-embracing law of God ; and when this is manifest in men who are types of that burning enthusiasm which is one form of sanctity, as in the case of Elias, St. Paul, and St. Patrick, the miracle of consistency is all the more wonderful. That such men should be able to guide with unerring eye and hand the fiery chariot of their own souls, and become, moreover, the instructors and masters of the wise and prudent until the end of time, is a spiritual phenomenon which we do not find in other quarters in this mutable and inconsistent world. It is true indeed that we invoke the aid of the poets, philosophers, and politicians of the past, but not as our masters ; it is we who turn them to our own account, taking as much or as little from them as suits our purposes. It would be unreal, therefore, to say that any nation is ruled by its dead sages, whereas, in different degrees and in proportion to the enduring vitality of the faith which they taught, we all feel that Catholic Saints preserve their personal influence from generation to generation. That this has been, and is the case in Ireland is a fact about which Catholics and Protestants are agreed ; and in the following Essays some attempt is made to trace the causes, and illustrate the nature of that influence. No one is more eloquent in his

acknowledgments of this fact than Dr. Todd,¹ whose "monumental" life of the Saint, as it has been admirably styled, is the great stronghold of the Protestant tradition regarding the Apostle of Ireland; but whether the Saint that he pictures was likely to have done the work of an Apostle must be left to the judgment of the reader.

When it is asserted that a spiritual leader has never relaxed his hold on a people for fourteen centuries, the statement is so extraordinary that we may well pardon those who are incredulous and demand proof. But how can this be done, except by going back over the whole period—a work beyond the capacity of reader as well as writer? Surely in such an investigation we may get help from the logic of induction, and if, at intervals in this long period we find the same singular and unmistakable spiritual phenomena in the history of Ireland, we are justified in arguing for their continuity, just

¹ Beginning rather timorously to resist the old Protestant theory that the history of St. Patrick is of "recent origin," he gradually rises to the level of his subject, and continues: "It is incredible that a whole nation should have combined thus to deceive themselves; and it is even more incredible that a mythological personage should have left upon a whole nation so indelible an impression of imaginary services; an impression which continues to the present day in their fireside lore, their local traditions, their warm-hearted devotion and gratitude; which has left also its lasting memorial in the ancient names of hills and headlands, towns and villages, churches and monasteries, throughout the country." (*Apostle of Ireland*, Pref. p. v.)

as the geologist believes in the course of stratas, although he has only dug at the beginning middle and end.

I have always held that St. Patrick's relations with St. Martin are the key to some of the greatest perplexities in his life, and that the history of the great Apostle of Gaul is the best set-off which we possess to that of St. Patrick. In both we see how, in those simple days, sanctity in an Apostolic Bishop was the chief quality the times demanded, and how the supremacy of the Apostle, in the absence of all earthly auxiliaries, made the Saint all in all to his disciples, and stamped his personality upon them. Moreover, the critical and historical importance of the Patrician traditions of Marmoutier, the monastery of St. Martin, can hardly be exaggerated. "The most ancient Abbey in Europe," as it is proudly styled by Dom Martène, its Benedictine annalist, was one of the chief citadels of the learning of the West in St. Patrick's time. Venerated by Clovis and his Francs its traditions carry us on through the ten or more centuries of its Benedictine occupation to our own times. Its records and traditions, as well as those of the neighbouring Church of St. Patrick, are unbroken, and have therefore a value which cannot be attached to the early Church history of Ireland or Scotland, the continuity of which has again and again been broken by barbarian inroads,

and the still more destructive invasions of the agents and ministers of Henry Tudor and John Knox.

St. Patrick's life in Ireland is the matter of his biography, which I have tried to deal with elsewhere, so I next take up the study of his work and influence in the twelfth century, the period at which, according to English historians, they were well nigh extinguished. The supposed letter of Adrian IV. to Henry Plantagenet has given a colour to this most unfounded supposition, and so the discussion of the authenticity of this document has found its way into my pages. Were it not for the argument which it is supposed to carry with it against the character of the Irish Church in the twelfth century, the document itself would not have much importance. It shows a strange ignorance of the constitution of kingdoms in the Middle Ages when the title of *Dominus* or "Lord," which was all that Henry II. aspired to in Ireland, and which was all that the English kings claimed until the time of Henry VIII., is supposed to have been equivalent to that of king. What *Dominus* meant in the international law of the period is very hard positively to determine, but that it was a title of honour, rather than of authority, is plain from the way in which the English kings themselves, who were vassals of the king of

France treated their own superior, with whom they were in constant and deadly conflict. If, therefore, as is suggested, Pope Adrian IV. had desired to invest Henry of England with a barren dignity similar to that of the King of France as suzerain of the Duke of Normandy, no violence need have been done to the national life of Ireland. Such an idea, however, as we shall see, is in direct contradiction to all that we know of this uncompromising and heroic Pontiff, who rivalled St. Gregory VII. in his consistent resistance to gigantic tyranny. All the Popes have not been equally successful, but as rulers none have ever laid aside that paternal character which their name implies. It was the beginning and the end of their strength as the Fathers of Christendom. The defence of the weak against the strong is the essence of that "priestcraft" which is the only immortal domination; and in what the world calls craft and policy, Catholics worship that Charity of Christ which has subdued the world. It is true that at times Popes have seemed to side with the strong; but it was when, in their far-reaching wisdom, they saw that it was the only way of saving the weak. It was so in Ireland when the irresistible Norman Free-Lances, who first came over at the invitation of a native prince, but ultimately by innumerable alliances with native Princesses, even

more than by arms,¹ had made a permanent settlement in the country. The action of the Popes, therefore, as seen in the various documents subsequent to Adrian IV. which are found in Theiner's collection, does not touch our question. The subject has lately attracted the attention of German scholars, who, as may be expected, are undisturbed by the political or sectarian spirit which has always infected the discussion in these countries; and, as we learn from Dr. Bellesheim's recent German *History of the Church in Ireland*, the tide of historical opinion in Germany has set strongly against the supposed "Bull of Adrian" and the letter of Alexander III., in which the latter Pope is said to mention it. For my part, I have nothing to add to my brief study of this complicated subject, except

¹ In 1753 James Fitz-Gerald, Earl of Kildare, in a memorial to George II., remarks of his ancestors, the Geraldines: "By the inheritance of lands, by inter-marriages with princesses of the kingdom, they became powerful." (*Earls of Kildare*, by the Marquis of Kildare, p. 285.) The same pacific treaties were also the rule with the other great Norman families. Such was the alliance of Strongbow with Eva Princess of Leinster, a much more important event than that "Conquest," of which the careful and learned Sir John Davies, Attorney-General in Ireland (1612), writes: "Five months after his first arrival, he (Henry II.), departed out of Ireland without striking one blow, or burning one Castle, or planting one garrison among the Irish, neither left he behind him one true subject more than those he found there at his coming over, which were only the *English Adventurerers* spoken of before . . . and this is that Conquest of King Henry II., so much spoken of." (*Discoverie why Ireland was never subdued*, &c., p. 12).

(at p. 133 *n.*) to make one additional remark on the supposed testimony of John of Salisbury in support of the claims of Henry Plantagenet, which, as will be seen, I regard as the only argument in favour of the "Bull," the critical value of which is worth discussing. It is certainly a notable fact that in the immense correspondence of this very communicative writer, as far as I can discover, there should only be one allusion to Ireland, in a letter to Pope Alexander III. complaining of those clerics who tried to escape from the control of their own bishop by taking refuge in "Wales, England, Ireland, and Scotland."

In the concluding Essays we tread upon more dangerous ground. They are studies of St. Patrick's work brought down to our own times, and there are few questions of the day which are more fiercely contested. It is hardly too much to say that at present there is no country in the world where more of the vital interests of mankind are on trial than in Ireland. Longer than any nation in Europe she has been fighting that popular battle for freedom which so often in its frenzy, there as elsewhere, seems to side with "the Revolution," and yet the lawless spirit has never succeeded in attaining permanent dominion over her people—and why? Because in no country in the world is there so large a proportion of loyal and devoted subjects of the Church. The outside

world tells us that this is all because of the power of "the priest," that magical impersonal which is supposed to account for so many things in the pages of Mr. Froude and kindred writers; but from whence does his power come? It is sheer nonsense to say that it is an unreasoning subjection on the part of a people, who, perhaps beyond all others in the world, are able to give a reason for the faith that is in them. This has not escaped Cardinal Newman, with his incomparable gift of finding out the kernel of everything. "I recollect," he writes, "some twenty-five years ago, three friends of my own, as they then were, clergymen of the Establishment, making a tour in Ireland. In the West or South they had occasion to become pedestrians for the day, and they took a boy of thirteen for their guide. They amused themselves with putting questions to him on the subject of his religion, and one of them confessed to me on his return that that poor child put them all to silence," "merely," as he adds, "by knowing and understanding the answers in his Catechism".¹ How is it that it does not occur to

¹ *Idea of a University*, p. 379. A somewhat similar story was told by the Cardinal's intimate friend, the late Bishop Moriarty of Kerry. A distinguished Protestant visitor at Killarney was present while the Bishop examined the boys in one of his country schools in their Catechism, and on their return home the visitor amused the Bishop by observing: "Well, my Lord, I always had a profound admiration for the dogmatic system of your Church, but really your ethical system seems to me even more wonderful."

men, sensible in other things, that the power of the priest is the same as the power behind the priest—that is, faith in the Divine authority of God and His Church, and in the eternal rewards and punishments which respectively attend on obedience and rebellion? Was it by a magical spell that Peter the Hermit, and St. Bernard flung Europe upon Asia in the Crusades, and not rather by the faith of those who listened to them? It really seems as if hostility to religion so utterly blinds some people, that they are incapable of recognising even its social and political influences. Who are so likely to know the ruling principles in the minds of the Irish poor as priests, who have passed their lives in an interchange of mutual confidence the most perfect and absolute which exists between man and man? Again and again in the last hundred years the torrent of the “Revolution” has swept over Ireland and dried up again like the showers from her own passionate skies. She has been distrusted and rejected by the Revolution from the days of Buonaparte to our own, and with good reason. A British Premier like Lord Palmerston, is much nearer of kin to the Mazzinian than an Irish Fenian. This has been pointed out by that keen-witted statesman Lord Beaconsfield in one of his political novels, and no people have had better opportunities of verifying the fact than those Lon-

don priests whose ministry has brought them into relations with the sick and starving revolutionists of France, Italy, and Ireland, and enabled them to compare their respective tempers.

Surely it is not necessary to prove that Catholic faith will always gravitate to obedience and loyalty as soon as the delirium from "oppression that makes wise men mad" has passed away? Write the lessons of the Catechism on the young brain, and love will give life to knowledge, and the child will remain in the man, unless he becomes an immoral man. From Voltaire and Rousseau to our own day the Revolution abroad has drawn its life from that infidelity which is equally as fatal to morals as to dogma. If a man in his childhood has a Christian mother worthy of reverence and love, the spirit of chivalry will be the spirit of his life, and he will be loyal and true to his sovereign, and to his native land, to his wife, and to his friend. This is one chief argument of my concluding Essay, and under heaven there is no subject better worthy of the consideration of all those who desire to bring peace and consolation to mankind.

The first chapter originally appeared in the *Dublin Review* and the second and third in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* and they are now reprinted with the kind permission of the editors and

proprietors. I should also observe that I have borrowed a few pages from "St. Martin and St. Patrick," which I have introduced into the enlarged edition of my *Life of St. Patrick*.

THE ORATORY, London, Aug. 15, 1891.

CHAPTER I.

ST. MARTIN AND ST. PATRICK.

ALTHOUGH two great names stand together in the title of this Chapter, our business is chiefly with St. Patrick. There is hardly a Saint in the calendar whose history has passed through so strange an ordeal. It was written originally from the testimony of his contemporaries in an age which was eminently one of faith; and for more than a thousand years it was as little questioned in Ireland as the history of St. Francis amongst the Umbrian vales. Then came the revolt of the sixteenth century against the interference of God in the affairs of men, and from that day to this the history of St. Patrick has been the object of the unwearied assaults of the adherents of that revolt in English-speaking nations. As a rule they have adopted the plan of attacking in detail; and in history this is always an easy mode of warfare, as facts are indifferent things which never come to

assist one another unless they are asked. We are also bound to confess that it is a style of attack against which the Acts of St. Patrick are peculiarly defenceless. Fragments of his extraordinary history, torn from their context, and made to stand by themselves, are almost incomprehensible. It is only when they are brought together that the personality of the Saint is revealed, and we see how his character, work, and even his length of days, are all inseparably bound up in that unity which is the best evidence of truth. We now claim the right of carrying St. Patrick's cause into a higher court, that he may be tried with his peers by the standard of Saints' lives; and, indeed, this is the only court to which it is worth while to appeal, for they who do not believe in the freedom and supremacy of supernatural power in this world can never understand St. Patrick. At the same time we are very far from assuming that Saints' lives are not subject to criticism as well as other biographies. In many things Saints are like other men, and subject to the same laws; and, even when they ascend to heights whither our eyes cannot follow them, we are all the while conscious that their road is the same as ours, and that it is only the speed with which they travel which has carried them out of our sight.

These considerations have induced us to bring together St. Martin and his disciple St. Patrick, in the hope that their lives may give light one to the other; and this is all the more likely as these two Saints were nearly related by the ties of kindred, presented in their lives the same extraordinary union of the mystical and apostolic character, and lived and worked under social conditions which in all essential respects were similar.

The history of St. Martin's life has been written by four of the Fathers of the Church—SS. Paulinus, Fortunatus, Gregory of Tours, and Sulpicius Severus—and his historic figure holds its place with those of Roman Emperors, and the representatives of that colossal power which impressed order and unity on history, as well as on society. Moreover, in studying his life, we have the advantage of one biography, that of Sulpicius Severus, which is a masterpiece in its own line, and a key to all the other records of the Saint. On the other hand, when St. Patrick died, at the end of the fifth century, Ireland, in all respects save her faith, was still outside the Roman world, and in the following century, when she began to take a prominent place in Europe, the Great Empire had passed away, and with it all the landmarks of the past. Moreover, those biographies of St. Patrick, from which all subsequent histories were drawn, are very rude productions: they bear

the stamp of the age in which they were written, when the Goth, the Vandal, and the Hun had well-nigh obliterated the literature of the world.

There is, however, a difficulty which suggests itself here, and demands an answer. Before the century succeeding that of St. Patrick came to a close, Ireland had begun to bear the proud title of "Island of Doctors," as well as of Saints: a title not usurped, but gratefully accorded by those nations who looked to her as the "University of the west". How is it that, as time went on, little or nothing appears to have been done in giving a critical and literary shape to the acts of St. Patrick? We venture to suggest the following explanation. It is true that during those ages Ireland gave a home to the exiled learning of Europe; but at the same time she was occupied in another work more absorbing and important than the cultivation of letters. As the *Vox Hyberionarum* followed St. Patrick from the land which his exile had consecrated, so it came to pass that scarcely had he left the earth before supplicating voices reached his disciples from Britain, Gaul, Germany, Switzerland, and even Italy; and we know how Columba, Columbanus, Fridolin, Gall, and legions of missionaries responded to the appeal, and how the Scoti, so long the terror of Europe, returned to their old battle-fields, as the messengers of the gospel of

peace and love. Deep learning and patient criticism could hardly be expected to flourish side by side with that spirit of apostolic enterprise which then absorbed the energies of the nation. To the Missioner, learning is rather an instrument than an end.¹ We may also add that the scanty and imperfect records of other great Missionaries in the fourth and fifth centuries show that this was the rule in other countries as well as Ireland. If we are right in this supposition, it may account for the fact that the records of St. Patrick in the *Book of Armagh*, which was composed about the year 650, and in later writings on the same subject, are little more than transcripts of some one of the original lives of the Saint,² copied by the scribe in the same rough state as he had found them. While we take this as evidence of the value which then attached to these ancient writings, we are at the same time

¹ From its origin, as Cardinal Newman remarks, Irish scholarship was rather scientific than literary. "As Rome was the centre of authority, so I may say Ireland was the native home of speculation;" then, as now, divine truth was the favourite object of its contemplations. See also Montalembert's account of the dialectical contests of St. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury (A.D. 668-690), with his Irish disciples, and Ozanam's amusing description of the dismay of Aelhuin when the Irish *grex philosophorum* with their daring speculations invaded the schools of Charlemagne. *Idea of a University*, p. 485. *Moines d'Occident*, v. 48. *La Civilisation Chrétienne chez les Francs*, p. 606, 5ième ed.

² This is the opinion of Mr. O'Curry as regards the Book of Armagh. MS. *Materials of Irish Hist.*, p. 347.

inclined to think that in our present very imperfect knowledge of the relative importance of these works, almost as much harm may be done to the Saint's history by the indiscriminate defence, as by the total rejection of these records. The defenders and the assailants of St. Patrick's history have again and again joined issue on verbal and other immaterial difficulties; hence the main points have been overlooked, and the Saint's history has been hidden in the dust of critical conflicts.

By the main points we mean those great features in the life of the Apostle of Ireland which are in keeping with the analogy of Church History and Catholic hagiology: features which, as we have already observed, are the inimitable seal of that unity in variety of which the Church is the perfect revelation in the spiritual order. The Communion of Saints is the creation of the prayer of Christ for the unity of the Redeemed, and it is this divine gift which enables us to recognise our forefathers in the faith. It teaches us what a Saint must have been, and what things are irreconcilable with the saintly character. This discernment, which is an hereditary instinct in Catholic nations, becomes a science under the guidance of the Church: the science by which she discerns the presence of heroic sanctity in the souls of men, and it is by the help of this science that Catholic writers are enabled to show how the

Saints in successive ages are revelations of one and the same Master, and continue to shine with His light as the peaks of a mountain chain retain the brightness of the setting sun.

If anyone objects that this style of argument merely lifts a Saint above the dust of earth to hide him in the clouds of heaven, we can only answer that this difficulty is inherent in the subject—for a religion without mysteries is a contradiction in terms. In our turn we may ask, what becomes of Saints' lives, and of the history of Christianity itself, when dealt with in any other manner? Is there any other way of treating the history of supernatural events, which can obtain the adhesion of any two reasonal beings? The truth is that unbelievers are driven to deny the very existence of Catholic Saints as a consequence of their rejection of a supernatural order.

Hence Christian history has been presented to us by some modern writers as an effect without a cause: a drama with the omission of the principal part. We do not mean to say that such writers are at all diffident in suggesting causes; but they are imaginary, and demand the simultaneous evolution of imaginary and incredible men and women as agents and recipients. When historians give us facts for causes: when we are asked to content ourselves with an explanation which only brings us

back to the same point : when the pleasure-seeking Roman, who revelled in seeing other men devoured, is supposed to have been unaccountably smitten with the desire of being devoured in turn : when we are told that the fanaticism and superstition of a few Galilean fishermen silenced and captivated the philosophy of Greece and Rome, and that warlike and barbarous nations knelt to the Cross from a natural sympathy with shame and sorrow, we can only say that it is rationalism, not faith, which asserts its independence of reason and common-sense.

There is no event in the world's history which bears any resemblance with its conversion to Christianity. There had been changes before, but they were only new fashions of things that were old, and whether Persian, Macedonian, or Roman ruled him, man remained the same. Then came a message such as he had never heard before. It was uttered in many tongues, but its purport was ever the same as that of St. Remigius to Clovis, *Burn that which you adore, and adore that which you have burned*, and it was received as true even by those who had not the courage to obey. It was a message that took man captive, and forced him on to suffering and death as if it were some conqueror regardless of human life, yet all the while he felt that then for the first time his will was his own, free from the

tyranny of the passions, and capable of standing alone against the world. Everywhere the result was the same, and therefore, although records may be defective, or altogether wanting, we conclude that the cause was identical. It was not royal edicts, nor State protection which converted the world: the secular arm may protect, it cannot give the faith. Everywhere the message from heaven came from human lips which had been touched by the fire of the Seraphim, and its evidence that it came from above lay in the fact that it asked nothing from men but a hearing.

The idea of bringing St. Martin and his disciple St. Patrick together after the lapse of nearly fifteen centuries was first suggested by a visit to Marmoutier, the ancient monastery of St. Martin,¹ and a study of the immemorial and abiding traditions of Touraine;

¹ Marmoutier stands on the bank of the Loire about two miles from Tours, and is now in the possession of the "Religious of the Sacred Heart". It was the cradle of Western Monasticism centuries before Iona and Lindisfarne and Luxeuil were peopled by the disciples of SS. Columba and Columbanus, and, like the Irish Monasteries, it eventually accepted the general rule of St. Benedict. The Abbey was destroyed in the Great Revolution, and in 1847 the site was purchased and saved from profanation by the Venerable Mère Barat. Nothing remains of the more modern Abbey save the wall, and the great gateway before which B. Urban II. preached the Crusade; but it may be said that the ruin of the Abbey has restored the Marmoutier of the fourth century, for the caves and catacombs where St. Martin and his disciples dwelt are now seen

and we hope to be able to prove that they are in such perfect harmony with the ancient Irish biographies of St. Patrick that it is as if a hand was stretched forth from Gaul to take up the broken chain of his history. The chain is a long one, as the links must be looked for in the writings of authors of different nations from the sixth to the twelfth century; and, if this gives interest and dignity to the subject, it also enhances its difficulty.

In the first place, it is necessary to investigate the evidence for the fact that St. Patrick and St. Martin were together at Marmoutier, and that the former at once set out to join St. Martin on his escape from captivity in Ireland: not that we ourselves have any doubts upon the subject, but because many modern writers have practically dismissed the consideration of this part of the Saint's history. The reader will understand how this has come to pass when we observe that the fact of St. Patrick's *personal* relations with St. Martin carries with it the proof of our Saint's extraordinary age of 120 years, and overthrows the theory of his connection with Scotland; and we believe that if

very much as they were in the Saint's time, and the civilised, as well as the Christian world, if the distinction is possible, owe a great debt to those who have preserved, and now keep watch over a sanctuary which has been the spiritual birthplace of many nations.

we succeed in proving the Saint's longevity, and in refuting the Scotch theory, all the chronological difficulties in his history will disappear. As regards authorities for that history, we are safe in saying that St. Patrick's own writings not only stand first, but that all other testimony must be subject to them. In the next rank we place the *Tripartite Life*, and that by Probus, and our object now is to show how these two biographies supply what is omitted in the Saint's writings, and that from a combination of the three we can construct a complete and consistent narrative.

The author of the *Tripartite*, and Probus tell us that St. Patrick joined St. Martin at Tours, and put himself under his direction. The latter writer also fixes the time of his stay at four years. St. Patrick died A.D. 492, and he himself tells us that he was "about sixteen years of age" (*fere sedecim*) "when carried captive to Ireland, and that he remained six years in servitude"; he was, therefore, in his twenty-second year when he escaped. Now St. Martin died A.D. 397. Ninety-five years, therefore, intervened between his death and that of his disciple. As St. Patrick was twenty-one years of age or twenty-two *incomplete* at the time of his escape, if we add to this the four years of Probus, then the 120 years of St. Patrick's life follow as a necessary consequence of his connec-

tion with St. Martin ; we have the beginning and the end.¹

Thus we find that the combined evidence of the *Tripartite Life*, and the *Life* by Probus, and the chronology of St. Martin's history, make it absolutely certain that St. Patrick joined St. Martin as soon as he made his escape from his captivity in Ireland ; but St. Patrick tells us that it was to his own country (*patria*) that his steps were then directed, and so we find ourselves at once face to face with the much-debated question

¹ It is not from want of other evidence that we dwell on this argument. The authorities for St. Patrick's longevity are overwhelming ; indeed, we believe that there is not a dissentient voice amongst ancient writers. For the fact that the Saint attained the age of 120 years we have the testimony of :

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| 1. The Tripartite Life. | 10. Book of Howth. |
| 2. The Book of Armagh(Tirechan). | 11. <i>The Four Masters.</i> |
| 3. The Vita Secunda. | 12. <i>The Chronicum Scotorum.</i> |
| 4. The Vita Quarta. | 13. Marianus Scottus. |
| 5. The Lebhar Brecc. | 14. Nennius. |
| 6. Annals of Tigbernach. | 15. Giraldus Cambrensis. |
| 7. Annals of Ulster. | 16. <i>Florence of Worcester.</i> |
| 8. Annals of Boyle. | 17. <i>Roger of Wendover.</i> |
| 9. Annals of Innisfail. | |

The four writers whose names are italicised add one or two years to St. Patrick's age, but this is probably owing to confusion arising from the fact that many ancient writers dated from the Incarnation, rather than from the Birth of Christ. Anyhow, we have here testimonies which might be still further multiplied, that St. Patrick's longevity was a fact universally accepted by historians from the sixth century down to the time of Father Colgan, and Ussher, both of whom are on our side.

of his nationality: a question the importance of which is much enhanced by the fact that upon it hangs the whole chronology of the Saint's life. Our position is this: We are convinced that his own writings are the only records of his life in which we can place unlimited trust, and that all other evidence, however ancient, must be put aside if it does not fit in with that of the Saint himself. At the same time, we are in no way inclined, with Tillemont, to confine ourselves to the *Confession* and *Epistle* of St. Patrick, to the exclusion of the ancient lives, and we believe that if this acute critic had had the evidence of their value which we now possess he would have treated them with more respect. There can be no question that some of them embody the testimonies of eye-witnesses to St. Patrick's missionary career in Ireland, evidence which, day by day, is more and more fully corroborated by historical and archæological investigations, while their simplicity and minuteness of detail and freedom from all that mechanism which betrays the special pleader, unite in imprinting upon them that seal of authenticity which distinguishes histories written in the childhood of nations. At the same time we are of opinion that a decided line must be drawn between the evidence of contemporary Irish writers, which bears on St. Patrick's mission in their own country,

and their testimony regarding the events of his life in other lands, just as we should accept the statements of a contemporary Japanese writer as regards St. Francis Xavier's mission in Japan, without expecting accuracy as to the events of the Saint's early life in Navarre.

We shall now proceed to string together the evidence which, while it binds St. Patrick to St. Martin, at the same time establishes the fact that the country of St. Martin was also the *patria*, or fatherland, of St. Patrick; and as this point, once established on his own testimony, carries with it the refutation of all contradictory theories, it will only be necessary to meet them indirectly. We shall confine ourselves to the Bollandist text of St. Patrick's writings; it is the one to which reference can most easily be made, and it is probably the best. In his account of his parentage and country, St. Patrick tells us that his grandfather and father bore respectively the names Potitus and Calphurnius, which, like his own, were common Roman names, and that his father was a Decurio,¹ and in more than one place the Saint refers to the nobility of his birth in language which clearly points to his Roman origin. He

¹ *Decurio*, under the Romans, was both a civil and military title. St. Patrick's connection with the military family of St. Martin favours the view that Calphurnius was a soldier.

tells us that when he was nearly sixteen years of age he was carried captive to Ireland from his father's villa, which was near the village (*vicus*) of Bonavem Taberniæ. The following is the account as it stands, in his own words: "I was led away captive into Ireland with thousands of others, and deservedly, because we had turned away from God, disobeying His commands, and rebelling against His priests, who taught us the way of salvation, and the Lord brought upon us the wrath of His indignation, and scattered us among many nations, even to the end of the earth (*etiam usque ad ultimum terræ*)". It is clear that the boy at this time was living with his Roman father in the midst of a large Christian population, in some peaceful country place, which was evidently supposed to be secure from invasion. Now, taking into account the state of North Britain at the end of the fourth century, is it possible to reconcile this narrative with the theory that the neighbourhood of old Kilpatrick, near Dumbarton, the ancient Alcluith, on the frontier of Argyleshire, was the place to which St. Patrick here alludes? It is evident from the Saint's words that he was in his own country, and in the midst of his own people, and not merely on a visit as some have stated. Our first step, therefore, must be to find out what, at this time, was the state of the Roman province of

Valentia, at the northern extremity of which stood the city (*urbs*) Alcluith of the Venerable Bede. Towards the end of the fourth century the Romans were gradually withdrawing their legions from Britain for the defence of the heart of the Empire, and then began that terrible period of desolation which at length drove the British into the net of their Saxon conquerors. Wave after wave of hardy warriors from Caledonia poured down upon the effeminate inhabitants of the south, and the fountain-head of that fierce northern torrent was precisely the spot where the Saint's father, Calphurnius, is supposed to have planted the family villa. Now, whatever may have been the military defences of the Crag of Dumbarton in the year 388, the idea that a Roman officer would have established his home in the open country, anywhere in its neighbourhood, is simply incomprehensible: as easily can be imagined that a British officer would set up a country house for his wife and children in the woods of Zululand in time of war.

It was at the close of this century, and the beginning of the fifth, that the clans above mentioned seemed on the point of subjugating the south as well as the north of Britain. The Western Highlands, and the country about Loch Lomond, were held by the Scots, whose armies were recruited

by a continued stream of their countrymen from • Ireland. The Picts held the eastern counties, while, according to Gibbon, the Attacotti,¹ a ferocious tribe of cannibals, were in possession of the country where now stands the modern Glasgow. In the year 367, in the reign of the Emperor Valentinian, these clans bore down upon the south; the Roman legions were routed, and London besieged, and although, upon the arrival of Theodosius, father of the emperor of that name, with an army from Gaul, the enemy was repulsed, there is no reason to suppose that the Roman rule was ever again re-established in North Britain, or that the title of Valentia then given to it was ever more than a barren one. Indeed, Lingard tells us that long before this time the northern province had been abandoned by the Romans,² and as the campaign of Theodosius took place A.D. 368-9, we have nineteen years of increasing desolation still to account for until St. Patrick's captivity in the year 388.

¹ *Roman Empire*, ch. xxv. sec. 2. This writer quotes St. Jerome on the cannibalism of the Attacotti. The Saint had seen some of the tribe in Gaul serving as auxiliaries in the Roman army. Gibbon, however, takes it on himself to append the word *Scotos* after *Attacotti*, to the text of St. Jerome, but he must have known that his view was not shared by St. Jerome, who distinguishes between these nations in the same sentence, and in several other passages of his works. Gibbon probably argued that the ready acceptance of Christianity by the Irish of that age was a sufficient reason for identifying them with this cannibal nation, and correcting St. Jerome.

² *Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 62.

From that time until the complete abandonment of Britain by the Romans, A.D. 409, all the ancient records of Britain tell the same tale of havoc and woe. Gildas attributes her calamities to the fact that about the year 383 the flower of her youth deserted her to follow the tyrant Maximus into Gaul; and Ussher gives their number at 30,000 soldiers and 100,000 plebeians, and informs us that they settled in Brittany, where, according to William of Malmesbury, a colony of their countrymen had preceded them in the time of Constantine.¹ When we complete the picture with the account which Venerable Bede gives us of North Britain at the end of the fourth century,² the conclusion is forced upon us that the desolate border-land of "Caledonia, stern and wild," was not likely to offer any temptations to a marauding expedition, and that it was one of the last places in the world where we should expect to find either the country residence of a Roman nobleman, or a large and peaceable Christian population.

For this introductory argument we claim no more than the balance of probabilities in support of what seems to us the decisive testimony of the Saint's own writings, in which, when giving an

¹ *Works of Gildas*, sec. 14, ed. Giles. Ussher, *Antiq. Britton. Eccl.*, p. 107. Gul. Malmsb., *Gesta Regum Angl.*, lib. i. sec. 1.

² Bk. i. sec. 12.

account of his return from captivity, he leads us step by step from Ireland back to what he calls his "own country" (*patria*), and satisfies us that this country was Gaul. Before, however, we begin to take up the chain of positive proof, we must direct attention to St. Patrick's repeated allusions to his sense of the immense distance which separated him from his native land. His frequent recurrence to this point shows that he regarded his second and voluntary exile as one of his greatest claims on the gratitude of the Irish people; but his language would be devoid of meaning if in the first instance, on his way into exile, his captors had done no more than bring him down the Clyde and across to Antrim—a voyage as short as it was familiar to the people he was addressing.

The *Confession* of St. Patrick and his *Epistle to Coroticus*, taken together, occupy six folio pages in the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists, and it is remarkable that in this brief space there are as many as eight passages in which the Saint dwells on this point, and we observe that in whatever way he alludes to his captivity and mission, he always speaks of the Irish as a foreign nation (*gens extera*). In two other places¹ he uses this term to designate nations at a distance—viz., in alluding to the heathen Franks as con-

¹ *Epist.*, sec. 7.

trasted with the Gauls, and to the Scots and Picts in Caledonia; and even in these passages we find an indirect testimony in favour of our position, for, in the first instance, the style of his language is that of a native of Gaul when speaking of her enemies, and in the other that of an inhabitant of Ireland to whom Caledonia was a strange and unknown land. It is curious to observe how vivid recollections of the past impart colour and intensity to his language whenever he alludes to his own captivity. He uses forms of expression which tell of one who felt that he had been carried, as it were, to another world. No one save a Roman citizen brought up amidst those proud traditions which made the Empire the limit of the world could speak as the Saint does of being "dispersed" with his fellow-captives "amongst many nations, even to the end of the earth" (*usque ad ultimum terræ*). Again, on his return to Ireland as a missionary, his expressions are precisely of the same character, as will be seen from the following extracts: "We are the Epistle of Christ to the ends of the earth, not eloquent, but still for all that written in your hearts, not with ink, but by the spirit of the Living God." "A people lately coming to the faith, whom the Lord hath gathered from the ends of the earth." "Yea, rather, for the love of God, I am a stranger and a wanderer amongst barbarian nations: God

Himself is witness that it is so." "The children of God, whom He hath lately sought for at the ends of the earth." "According to the flesh, I am of noble blood, for my father was a Decurio : I have bartered my nobility (I feel neither shame nor sorrow) for the sake of others ; in a word, I am delivered in Christ to a foreign nation for the ineffable glory of that everlasting life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."¹

Now, bearing in mind all the circumstances of time and place, we argue that it is impossible to reconcile these extracts with the view that North Britain in the year 372 was the fatherland of St. Patrick, while they are quite natural in the mouth of one born of Roman or Gallo-Roman parents in any part of Gaul, which, in our Saint's time, was probably the most Roman of all the subjugated countries of the Empire.²

It is not our intention to entangle ourselves and our readers in the controversy concerning the precise place in Gaul where St. Patrick was born : our only concern here is with his nationality, as evidenced by his own language and his relations with St. Martin. We regard this point as much more important than the identification of his birthplace.

¹ *Confessio*, cap. i. sec. 4 ; cap. iv. sec. 16. *Epistola*, sec. i. iv. and v.

² Lagrange, *Vie de S. Paulin de Nole*, p. 1.

It is the nation to which a man belongs, not the spot where he happens to see light, which leaves its stamp upon his character ; so long as he has had time to come under the influence of its spirit and traditions, which was certainly the case with St. Patrick, seeing that it was in his sixteenth year that he was carried into captivity. As yet it seems that the exact birthplace of St. Patrick, as well as that of SS. Martin, Ambrose, and Gregory VII., cannot be discovered ; and we must content ourselves with the knowledge that he identified himself with that Roman race which received the empire of the civilised world that it might make it over to Christ.

As, however, we take our stand on the evidence of the Saint's writings, it is necessary to meet an objection drawn from a passage in the *Confession*. The Saint is alluding to his anxiety concerning some of his flock, who were apparently suffering great domestic persecution, and he goes on to say :

“ Wherefore, although I might leave them and set out for Britain, if I pleased, and although I was desirous and prepared to go, as it were, to my country and kinsfolk, and not only thither, but also as far as Gaul, that I might see the face of the Saints of my Lord : God knows that I desired it ardently. But, bound by the Spirit (who declared that if I did this He would judge me to be

guilty), I fear to lose the labour which I have begun, and not I, but Christ the Lord, who commanded me to come, and be with them for the remainder of my life.”¹

Some writers have argued that the distinction here drawn between Britain and Gaul is a proof that it is Great Britain to which St. Patrick alludes, and that it excludes all claim on the part of Gaul to the fatherland of the Apostle of Ireland. We find, however, that the difficulty vanishes when we compare the geographical nomenclature used by St. Patrick with that of his contemporaries, Sulpicius Severus and St. Paulinus of Nola. It is true that all modern France, including Britannia (Brittany), was known as Gaul; but at the same time there was a clearly marked distinction between the countries of the Belgæ, the Celtæ, and the Aquitani, the three great nations inhabiting, respectively, the north, middle, and south of Gaul. St. Martin's monastery at Tours was situated in the midst of Gallia Celtica, the country of the Celts, or Gauls *par excellence*, as distinguished from the Belgæ and Aquitani. Hence when Gallus, the disciple of St. Martin, is introduced in the *Dialogues* of Sulpicius Severus as addressing an assembly of the Aquitani, he apologises for his boldness in that “he, a Gaul, should venture to

¹ Cap. iv., sec. 19.

speaking in the presence of Aquitani".¹ Again, St. Paulinus makes the same distinction, and when celebrating the apostolic labours of St. Martin and St. Delphinus, Bishop of Bordeaux, he says, "Gaul took Martin to herself, and Aquitania Delphinus".²

Although Brittany, under its earlier denomination of Armorica, was originally included in Gallia Celtica, it is certain that in St. Patrick's time it had come to be regarded as a separate province, held by British settlers from the island whose name it assumed. We have seen on the evidence of William of Malmesbury that this colonisation had begun in the time of Constantine, nearly two hundred years before St. Patrick wrote his *Confession*. The distinction, therefore, between Brittany and Gaul proper would probably be even more strongly marked than that which existed between the last-named province and Aquitaine, and thus there is no difficulty in understanding St. Patrick when he speaks of a journey from Ireland to the coast of Brittany, and from thence "as far as Gaul".

St. Patrick refers to Britannia in three different places in his *Confession*. In the text in the *Book of Armagh* the word is always in the plural, while

¹ "Me hominem Gallum inter Aquitanos verba facturum." (*Dial.* cap. xxvii. Also *Dial.* ii. cap. viii.)

² "Gallia Martinum, Aquitania Delphinum sumpsit." (Lagrange, p. 70.)

in that of the Bollandists it occurs twice in the plural and once in the singular. It has been argued that this predominance of the plural form points to Britannia Major, and its various divisions under the Romans. We find, however, in the writings of St. Jerome,¹ that in more than one place he adopts the singular, Britannia, in referring to Great Britain,² while Venerable Bede³ uses the singular and plural indiscriminately. So, even supposing the texts were unanimous, no valid argument could be drawn from them. When Britannia is mentioned by ancient authors it is the context, not the form of the word, which must be our guide in distinguishing between the two Britannias.

At the close of the fifth century, when St. Patrick wrote, the island of Britain for many years had lain in the silence and shadow of death. The work of destruction, begun by Scots and Picts, had been finished by the Saxons, and it is well-nigh certain that at that time little trace remained at Dumbarton of those "miserable survivors of the British nation," whom Venerable Bede describes as vainly imploring the aid of the Romans in the year 446, in the well-

¹ *Opera*, vols. i. and v. pp. 1038, 917. Venetiis, 1771.

² The same form is also found in St. Athanasius *Ep. ad Jovian*. Cf. Loof's *Antiq. Britonum Scotorumque Eccl.*, p. 10.

³ *Eccl. Hist.* cap. xv. sec. 35, and cap. xxi. sec. 47.

known letter to Ætius, entitled, "The Groans of the Britons".¹

But to return to the evidence drawn from St. Patrick's itinerary. From the narrative in the *Tripartite Life*, we learn that St. Patrick's captors, starting from Armorica, the modern Brittany, sailed to the north, and descended on the eastern coast of Ireland, and that, having sold Patrick in Antrim, they passed still further southward, and sold his sisters in Louth.² They must, therefore, have skirted the western shores of Ireland, thus avoiding the south-eastern coast of Great Britain, where they were in danger of falling in with the Roman fleets. It is clear that such a course cannot fit in with the Dumbarton theory: a voyage northward from the mouth of the Clyde would have taken the fleet to the North Pole.

All authorities, ancient and modern, agree in identifying the modern Slemish with the ancient *Sliabh-Mis*, the mountain on which, for six years, St. Patrick guarded the flocks of Milcho, a chieftain

¹ *Eccl. Hist.* lib. i. cap. xiii.

² "The sons of Fechtmaide . . . went to ravage in Armorica . . . and in the ravaging were slain Calpurn, son of Potitus, Patrick's father, and his mother Concess, daughter of Ocbass of Gaul . . . then put to sea, and Patrick and his two sisters were with them in captivity. They went round Ireland northwards, and they landed in the north and sold Patrick to Miluic, son of Buan, to the King of Dalaradia." (*Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*, p. 17. Whitley Stokes. *Rolls Collection*, 1887. *Trias Thaum.* p. 119.)

in Antrim, whose date in Irish annals corresponds with that of the Saint's captivity.¹ St. Patrick revisited the spot on his return to Ireland, hoping to convert his former persecutor, and longing, as we may well believe, to see again the place, to which, he tells us in after years, his mind reverted, as to the scene of his most intimate and sublime communications with God. Slemish is situated near Ballymena, and in the valley, at a distance of about three miles from the base of the mountain, we find one of those cyclopean ruins which carry us back to the earliest ages of Irish history. This tradition identifies as the castle of Milcho. Standing on this spot, facing the cloud-capped summit of Slemish, the past returns, when we see how Nature, here so unchanged, combines with written records and traditions in bringing out the extraordinary consistency of St. Patrick's history.²

¹ Colgan, *Acta SS. Hib.* p. 741.

² The Saint's occupation in his solitude on Slemish is evident from his own words, "I was daily tending sheep" (*pecora*). This is the primary signification of the word from the Greek "to shear"; and he adds, "I remained upon the mountain," where naturally sheep would be sent to feed. The statement, therefore, that our Saint was a swinherd is repugnant to fact as well as to our feelings. The view that St. Patrick was employed in the care of swine is the tradition at Old Kilpatrick, which claims the honour of being not only the birthplace, but also the *burial-place* of St. Patrick, and an ancient monument in the churchyard is said to mark his grave. Scottish archæologists have argued that the figure on the stone probably represents St. Patrick, as it bears a pig on its shoulder. On

The Saint tells us that when he had passed six years in captivity, he received a supernatural intimation that his deliverance was at hand, and that he should return to his own country (*patria*), and that a ship was in readiness to bear him away; he also informs us that the place where the ship lay was at a distance of 200 Roman miles, equivalent to 126 English. Now, the obvious way in which St. Patrick would find the sea again, at this distance, was by facing westward.¹ Thus the Saint, in his journey from Slemish, would turn away from the narrow strait which, at this point, separates Antrim from Scotland. It is evident, therefore, that St. Patrick on his way home retraced the course along the western coast of Ireland, which six years before had been pursued by the fleet which had carried him captive. Again, the study of the Saint's writings reveals another point which enables us to trace the direction of his flight. In writing for Catholics, it is needless examining the stone, we found that it represents a belted knight in full armour, with a sword at his side. It may be that some heroic *Sir Patrick* of days gone by now sleeps beneath the stone. Our convictions regarding this monument are, therefore, stronger than those of the Rev. Duncan Macnab, who observes: "It has no inscription. I saw nothing clearly indicating its relation with St. Patrick." (*Archæological Dissertation on the Birthplace of St. Patrick*, p. 40.) It would be more correct to say that everything clearly indicates that it has no sort of relation to St. Patrick.

¹ This is considered "highly probable" by Bishop Healy, *I.E. Record*, Oct., 1889, p. 908.

to say that we consider ourselves justified in treating the supernatural events recorded by the Saint as an integral part of his history. Amongst these, one of the most momentous and best known is the invitation which he styles the *Vox Hyberionarum*, the "Voice of the Irish," which the Saint heard across the seas recalling him to Ireland. It was the origin of his vocation to the apostolate, and, measured by its results, no greater message has come from God to man since the call of the Apostle of the Nation. The following is the Saint's account of this supernatural communication, which he received some years after he returned to his own country :—

"In a vision of the night I saw a man¹ named Victoricus coming as it were from Ireland, with innumerable letters, one of which he gave me, and in the first line I read, 'the Voice of the Irish,' and as I repeated the two first words of the letter, I seemed at the same moment to hear the voices of those who had dwelt near the wood of Fochloth, which borders the Western Sea, and they cried, as it were, with one voice, 'We beseech thee, holy youth, to return, and still walk amongst us'. And my heart was melted within me, and I could read

¹ "A man, not angel, as the Lives all have it," observes Dr. Todd (p. 377). Seeing, however, that Daniel (ix. 21) speaks of the Angel as "the man Gabriel," the same form of expression, in so scriptural a writer as St. Patrick, need not surprise us, in speaking of the Angel Victor, to whom he probably alluded.

no more ; and I awoke. Thanks be to God, seeing that after many years the Lord has granted them that for which they supplicated."

The following extract from Tirechan's " Collections concerning St. Patrick " in the *Book of Armagh* tells us how, in the course of time, St. Patrick obeyed the call which he received in this vision :—

" Soon after he (St. Patrick) founded the church of Icarrie Dagri, and another church, Immruig Thuaithe ; and he wrote letters to Cerpanus. And, having entered into the royal palace, they did not rise up before him, except Hercus the layman, and he said to him, ' Why have you only arisen to honour my God in my person ? ' And Hercus said to him, ' I know not why, but by God's power ignited sparks ascended from your lips to mine '. The Saint also said to him, ' If you will be baptised in the Lord you shall receive what I have power to give you '. He answered, ' I will receive '. And they came to the fountain which is called in the Scottish tongue ' Loigles, ' but with us ' the Calf of Cities '. And, having opened the book and baptised Hercus, he heard men behind his back deriding him for that which he was doing, because they knew not what he did. And he baptised many thousand men on that day. Among their opinions of baptism he heard the following : Behold, two noble-

men were discoursing behind him, and said one to another, 'What thou sayest is true; it was foretold from the circle of the year which has passed by, that you would come hither in those days'. And he said, 'Tell me your name, I entreat you, and that of your father, and of your country, and of your house, and residence'. He answering said, 'I am the son of Amolngid, the son of Fechrach, the son of Echach, from the Western Country, from the plain of Domnon, and from the wood of Fochloth'. And when he heard the name of his father and the wood of Fochloth, he rejoiced greatly, and said to him, 'Endeus, the son of Amolngid, I will go with you if I live, because the Lord commanded me that I should go'. And Endeus said, 'You shall not go with me, lest we be both slain'. The Saint then said, 'You shall never arrive at your country, unless I shall go with you, and you shall not have eternal life, because you came here on my account, like Joseph before the children of Israel'. But Endeus said to Patrick, 'Do you baptise my son, because he is of tender age, but I and my people cannot believe you until we come to our own people, lest those people laugh at us'. Conallus was accordingly baptised, and Patrick gave him his benediction, and held his hand, and gave him to Cathiacus, the bishop, and he brought him up, and Cathiacus taught him, and Mucneus, the brother of

Cathiacus, the bishop, whose remains are in the great church of Patrick, in the wood of Fochloth."

Then comes an account of an appeal from the six sons of Amolngid to the King Laeghaire, son of Nial, of the nine hostages, on the subjects of their inheritance, in which St. Patrick judged as assessor with the king, after which they set out on their journey westward.

"Because necessity obliged them (*necessitas poscit illos*) to pass through the wood of Fochloth before the beginning of the year, on the second Easter, because of the children exclaiming with great clamour, he heard them in their mother's womb saying, 'Come, St. Patrick, save us'." ¹

The evidence supplied by this extract fits in with St. Patrick's narrative, and lights up one of the most important events in his life. He tells that during the six years of his captivity he had remained in the service of the same master,² and there is no question as to this man's identity: all authorities unite in telling us that the boy was sold to Milcho. When, therefore, on his return to Ireland, after an absence of nearly forty years, we find that St. Patrick was familiar with names of persons and places in Mayo, in which county the

¹ *Book of Armagh*, Betham, vol. i. 356, 359.

² *Confessio*, cap. ii. sec. 7.

wood of Fochloth was situated,¹ we conclude that it was on the occasion of his flight that he made the acquaintance of those whose voices reached him from the shores of the Western Sea. This is the only reasonable explanation of the fact, as it is most unlikely that the young slave should have visited Fochloth for the purpose of buying sheep, as Dr. Lanigan supposes!²

We now proceed to follow our Saint on his voyage from the west coast of Ireland, on his return to "his own country," and to show how the evidence drawn from his writings, and the testimony of his biographer, unite with the history and traditions of Tours in leading him at this period from Ireland to St. Martin at Marmoutier.

The narrative of the voyage, as it stands in the Saint's words, runs thus: "Forthwith we put to sea, and after three days reached the land, and for twenty-seven days we travelled through a desert".³

¹ As we learn from the text, the wood of Fochloth was a well-known and sacred place at the time of the composition of the *Book of Armagh*, and Colgan and others have given conclusive evidence that it stood in the barony of Tirawley in Mayo.

² This learned writer, *Irish Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. p. 148, in arguing that St. Patrick sailed from Bantry, observes, that "the distance of about 200 (Roman) miles answers very well," whereas it is nearer to 500 of such measurement; and, at p. 163, he endeavours to elude the difficulty of St. Patrick's connection with Fochloth in the manner quoted in the text.

³ *Confessio*, cap. ii. sec. 8.

The Saint gives us no clue by which to determine the country at which he then arrived, save that which is drawn from his expressions regarding his captivity, as he came from some country far away, "to the ends of the earth," so in like manner must have been his return. On this point, however, we have the positive evidence of his biographer, Probus. Some grave authorities seem disposed to place this writer foremost amongst the biographers of St. Patrick; but, without going so far as this, there are special reasons which give great importance to his testimony on the point under consideration. It appears to us that none of the ancient writers of St. Patrick's history have given us anything more than traditions regarding those sixty years of his life which elapsed before his mission to Ireland, and the special value of the evidence of Probus in our present argument arises from the fact that it fits in with St. Patrick's narrative as found in the *Confession*. It is the generally received opinion that we cannot place Probus later than the tenth century, and the arguments of Father Colgan leave no doubt on our mind that he was not an Irishman.¹

This opinion of the learned author of the *Trias Thaumaturga* is grounded on the evident ignorance of Probus as regards Irish expressions, and the

¹ *Trias Thaumaturga*. p. 61, n. 1.

names of some of the best known places in Ireland. At the same time, we find that, amongst the seven ancient biographers of St. Patrick, this writer alone identifies the precise place of the Saint's landing on his return to Gaul. We, therefore, conclude that he supplemented the Irish records by the help of the traditions of Gaul. His account runs as follows :—

“After twelve days, in the company of the Gauls, he reached Brotgalum, going on from thence to Trajectus. Here, by the aid of the Christians, the blessed Patrick obtained his liberty, and, having escaped, he arrived at Tours, and joined Martin, the bishop, with whom he remained for the space of four years, receiving the tonsure, and admission into the clerical state, and he held fast to the doctrine and learning that he received from him.”

For the sake of readers unacquainted with St. Patrick's *Confession*, it is necessary to observe that in it the narrative is almost always incidental, incomplete, and secondary to the main object, which is to declare the mercies of God in the Saint's regard. We are, therefore, compelled to complete the story from other sources. We have already given all that he tells us concerning his voyage and arrival in his own country. We have now to see how far this corresponds with and verifies the statement of Probus. St. Patrick says that he

was three days at sea, while Probus speaks of a journey of twelve days ; but this may refer to some one subsequent to the landing of the Saint in Gaul. The point in the testimony of Probus with which we are now concerned is found in the fact that he makes St. Patrick start from Brotgalum on his way to St. Martin. It is plain that Brotgalum is either an ancient form or a corruption of the name Burdigala or Burdegala—the ancient Bordeaux. This is the opinion of Father Colgan and Dr. Lanigan, and all doubt is removed by the account which Probus gives of the next stage of the Saint's journey, when he brings him to Trajectus, which, in Arrowsmith's atlas of ancient Gaul, is found on the river Dordogne, about sixty miles to the east of Burdigala or Bordeaux. From this point St. Patrick must have started northward to reach St. Martin at Tours, at a distance of about two hundred miles, and he goes on to say that "for twenty-seven days we travelled through a desert".¹

A glance at the ancient map of Gaul will show that in St. Patrick's time a great part of the country between Trajectus and Tours well deserved the name of a desert. The network of rivers, tributaries of the Loire, and now known as La Vienne, La Claire, Le Blanc, L'Indre, Le Gartempe, &c., must

¹ "Viginti et septem dies per desertum iter fecimus." (*Confessio*, cap. ii. sec. 8.)

have exposed the country to periodical inundations in those days when rivers had it all their own way. So, from Tours in the north, to Limonum, Alerea and Segora in the south, east and west, we find some five thousand square miles, which, as far as the ancient map is concerned, give no signs of possession by man. Travellers entangled amidst those rivers and morasses must have advanced very slowly, and thus it appears that both place and time fit in with St. Patrick's narrative.

Nature has changed her face along the line of St. Patrick's journey, and there is little now to remind us of its primeval desolation save that the rivers preserve some of their old habits, and now and then combine with the inundations of the giant Loire in setting man at defiance. Time, however, with its alternate gifts and ravages, has left untouched the traditions regarding St. Patrick's journey. There is something more than antiquarian interest in the feelings of the Christian traveller who visits the spot on the banks of the Loire where immemorial tradition and an ancient monument mark the spot at which the Saint crossed the river on his way to Marmoutier. At about twenty miles from Tours the railway between that city and Angers stops at the *Station St. Patrice*; the *Commune* is also named after the Saint, and, as we shall see, there is

historical evidence that it has been thus designated for at least nine hundred years.

The first witness whose evidence we shall take on the subject of the Saint's arrival at *St. Patrice*, is one which many believe to have survived since his time ; but on this point the reader must form his own opinion. Above the station, on the side of the hill which rises from the banks of the Loire, we find the famous tree which bears the "Flowers of St. Patrick". For ages past it has been an object of religious veneration with the people of Touraine, and in our own times it is particularly interesting to find that this devotion was shared by that great servant of God, Léon Dupont, the Thaumaturgus of Tours. Mgr. C. Chevallier, President of the Archæological Society of Touraine, has published a very full account of this tree, and of the traditions connected with it,¹ the substance of which we subjoin, together with the result of personal investigations made on the spot in August, 1881. At this season the tree was covered with foliage so luxuriant, from the ground upwards, that it was impossible to distinguish the stem, and in every respect it presented the appearance of a tree in its prime, without a sign of decay. It belongs to the botanical class *Prunus spinosa*, or blackthorn, and it was covered with

¹ *Annales de la Société d'Agriculture, Science, &c., du Département d'Indre et Loire*, tome xxx. année 1850, f. 70.

berries at the time of our visit. These, however, were the evidence of a second efflorescence in the spring. The celebrity of the tree arises from the fact that every year at Christmas time it is seen covered with flowers, and the tradition at *St. Patrice*, handed down from father to son, affirms that for fifteen hundred years this phenomenon has been repeated at the same sacred season, since the day when St. Patrick, returning from Ireland, crossed the Loire on his way to join St. Martin, and lay down to rest at the foot of this tree. It matters not how intense the cold of any particular winter may be, while the ground beneath and the country round lie in their white shroud, the "Flowers of St. Patrick" unfold their blossoms, and bid defiance to the fierce north winds which sweep the valley of the Loire. It belongs to science to determine whether this appearance of the "Flowers of St. Patrick" can be reconciled with the laws of Nature. We certainly do find other instances of trees flowering in winter; but, unless we knew all the circumstances, comparison would be useless. Thermal springs beneath the tree, or a sheltered position, may account for the phenomena in other instances; but, as Mgr. Chevallier remarks, in the case of the "Flowers of St. Patrick," there can be no suspicion of subterranean heat, seeing that while the flowers are in bloom, the ice and snow cover the ground

beneath. Moreover, the tree stands at a considerable elevation, and in a most exposed position. Anyhow, it cannot be denied that it strengthens our argument to meet this strange tree with its attendant traditions, in the line of St. Patrick's journey from Trajectus to Tours, as marked out by Probus.

Our next witness is of a more ordinary description. On the same eminence, at a distance of about thirty yards, stands the ancient parish church dedicated to St. Patrick. From the style of its architecture, it is clear that it belongs to the tenth or eleventh century, and in the *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Noyers*¹ we find no less than thirty charters relating to this church, and the parish and cemetery attached to it. One, bearing the date of 1035, contains a deed of gift by which a certain noblemen named Archambauld makes over to the monks of the Abbey of Noyers a house and lands adjoining the "Church of St. Patrick," with all his rights as patron of the church and cemetery; also a tithe of the profits of his weirs in the river Indre. Another charter, dated 1069, completes the history of Archambauld, telling us how he went with Foulque, Count of Anjou, on an expedition against the Castle of Trebas, where he was mortally wounded, and how his son Andrew, in the presence of his dying

¹ Pp. 11, 69.

father, confirmed the donation to the monks of Noyers. Moreover, we find that the church stood near the Roman road (*maximam viam*¹) between Anjou and Tours. Thus ancient records and immemorial traditions complete our story, and set St. Patrick on the high road to St. Martin at Marmoutier.

If it appears to our readers that a solitary incident in the Saint's life is undeserving of so lengthy an investigation, we would remind them of the immense labours which learned men have expended on the history of St. Patrick's life, and how general is the impression that the result has been unsatisfactory. We lay down the works of Ussher, Lanigan, and Todd, with the feeling that these writers have indeed displayed their erudition, but that their arguments are too often only so many heavy chains which are loose at both ends. A good deal of this is owing to the traditional prolixity which seems to have become inherent in the subject; and it has been justly remarked that "Prolixity exercises a more deceptive influence than all the sophisms classified in books of logic".² It is evident that the profusion of the ancient sources of St. Patrick's life has been a snare in this respect. When enumerating the authorities

¹ *Cartulaire*, p. 229.

² Dr. Whately, quoted in *Proteus and Amadeus*, p. 13.

for his extraordinary age, we had a specimen of the œcumenical evidence which can be summoned in support of his history. At the same time, as has been already observed, in many accounts we must be prepared for many discrepancies, and, unless we can discriminate and give their real value to our authorities, we shall find ourselves going round in a circle like men in a snowstorm. All who are familiar with the various controversies concerning St. Patrick will understand the importance of the point which we have undertaken to establish. There is no fact in St. Patrick's life which comes to us borne on such a tide of ancient authority as the statement that he lived to the age of one hundred and twenty years, and we believe that those modern writers who, regarding this as an insurmountable difficulty, have attempted to rearrange the figures of his chronology, are mainly responsible for the bewildered incredulity which has possessed the public mind on the subject of St. Patrick's history.

It is a difficult matter to defend a disputed historical position so far removed from our own times. Ancient authors are simple and straightforward: they do not appear to anticipate objections, so they seldom give us the sources of their information, or trouble themselves with collateral evidence. Hence the importance of the style of

argument we have adopted. Starting with St. Patrick's account of himself, which is accepted as the undoubted basis of his history, it has been our object to show that witnesses summoned from another country tell the same story as the Irish biographers of the Saint. There is also another writer of great name whose evidence ought not to be passed over. The *Chronicon* of Marianus Scottus was written about the middle of the eleventh century, at a period not far removed from that of Probus, and, if we except a contradictory statement regarding the date of St. Martin's death, his evidence regarding the year of St. Patrick's birth, and his connection with St. Martin, exactly corresponds with that of Probus.¹ It is true that there is reason to believe that some of the entries regarding St. Patrick in the *Chronicon* are by another hand; but, as Marianus belonged to the Irish monastery of St. Martin at Cologne, from whence he passed to another house dedicated to the same Saint at Mayence, we are inclined to think that, even granting interpolations, the *Chronicon* is an important witness to the traditions preserved in the Monasteries of St. Martin on the subject of their patron's relations with the Apostle of Ireland.

It is now no longer necessary to discuss the

¹ *Chronicon*, p. 712; ed. Waitz. Migne.

probability of a vigorous old age extending beyond a century.¹ Instances are multiplied every day in which baptismal certificates and other indisputable testimony can be produced in evidence, and the fact is so well established that the rates of Government insurances are now calculated up to the age of 108 on the returns of the Registrar-General; but amongst historical cases of longevity we know of none for which the arguments are more cogent than those

¹ The evidence for the longevity of Thomas Parr rests on no less authority than that of the famous Harvey. He examined the body of Parr in the presence of several men of science of the day, and he also gives an account of Parr's life, in which he unhesitatingly affirms that he lived to the age of *one hundred and fifty-two years and nine months*. Amongst other extraordinary phenomena, Harvey observed that "the cartilages of the ribs were not found harder, or converted into bone in any greater degree than in ordinary men". The same absence of one of the most common signs of senescence was remarked by Professor Rolleston, in the case of John Pratt, who died at Oxford in 1863, in his 107th year; he tells us that "the costal cartilages cut with the greatest ease". (See Harvey's Works, *Sydenham Society*, p. 590; and *British and Foreign Med.-Chir. Review*, vol. xxxi. p. 515; also "Thomas Parr," in Chambers' *Book of Days*, and *Longevity*, by Barnard Van Oven, M.D., London, Churchill, 1853, where we find a list of 2003 centenarians of various nations, seventeen of whom are said to have lived to the age of 150.) The Jesuit Father de Montalto, born 13th May, 1689, entered the Society Sept. 12, 1706, and he was present in the church of the Gesù on Aug. 7, 1814, when Pius VII. re-established the Society, being in his 126th year, exactly 108 years since his entrance into that body. (Crétineau—Joly. *Hist. de la Compagnie de Jésus*, v. 524.) The longevity of the natives of California is very extraordinary. In 1881, the photograph of Gabriel of Salivar was sent to the Vatican as that of "the oldest Catholic in the world," and at the time of his death there was convincing evidence that he had reached the age of 150 years. (See *Catholic Missions*, Jan., 1891.)

which are produced in the case of the Apostle of Ireland, as deduced from his age at the time of his connection with St. Martin in 393, and his death after an interval of nearly one hundred years. It is remarkable that the chronology of St. Patrick's history affords an indirect confirmation of the opinion of Tillemont and the Bollandists, who gave 397 as the date of St. Martin's death. We believe that this is the date almost universally received by modern authorities, amongst whom are Cardinal Newman and Mgr. Chevallier, whose profound archæological labours have done so much to illustrate the history of Touraine. According to his Irish biographers, St. Patrick's connection with Marmoutier terminated with the death of St. Martin, and in the same year he began his pilgrimages to the holy places of Europe. In adopting this mode of life he had probably before his mind the example of those famous pilgrims, the Seven Brothers, who, with the consent of St. Martin, left Marmoutier and spent five years in visiting *les grands pèlerinages du monde*.¹

Now that we have brought St. Patrick to St. Martin, we are tempted to go further, and to inquire how far, and in what way, the influence of the master told upon the disciple. We do not mean that in the case of a being so superhuman as

¹ *N.D. des Septs Dormants*, p. 10.

St. Patrick it is possible to say how much of his spirit was his own, and how much was borrowed. When, at the age of twenty-two, he took his place amongst the disciples of St. Martin, he had already begun that life of a spirit in the flesh which makes man the companion of angels. This is the testimony of all his ancient biographers; but it is principally from his own words that we arrive at this conclusion. The Saints have a language which they alone can speak, and yet it is a language of which they are not masters. We may say of St. Patrick what St. Bernard said of St. Norbert, that he was the "*Fistula sancti Spiritus*": the unresisting, and plainly at times, the unconscious instrument of God. Hence the strange inconsistency of his language about himself, when, like St. Paul, he reveals his sanctity in his attempts to hide it. In the account which he gives of his spiritual state at the time of his captivity, he says that he was "ignorant of the true God," and he attributes his sufferings to the just vengeance of God; but when we read a little further, we find how the aged Saint is betrayed into revealing the secret, which, in his humility, he was fain to hide. A century of labour and penance had not chilled the self-avenging fires of that heart. Like all the Saints, he makes the sins of others his own, and, as we observe in the concluding sentence of the following extract, he

tries to compel his youth to be the accuser of his old age :—

“On coming to Ireland, I was daily tending sheep, and many times in the day I prayed, and more and more the love of God and His faith and fear grew in me, and the spirit was strengthened, so that in a single day I have said as many as a hundred prayers, and in the night nearly the same, and I dwelt in the woods and on the mountain, and before the dawn I was summoned to prayer by the snow and the ice and the rain, and I did not suffer from them, nor was there any sloth in me *as I see now*, because then the Spirit was burning within me”.¹

This is the language of one whose mind and character baffle all scrutiny. It is the unintentional revelation of the interior life of one who, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, was an austere hermit and a mystical Saint from his boyhood, and who was already prepared for the manner of life more angelic than human which was observed by the disciples of St. Martin.

When St. Patrick arrived at Marmoutier there was nothing in the external aspect of the place to reveal the work which was going on. St. Martin had chosen it on account of its seclusion and separation from the world, and, with his disciples,

¹ *Confessio*, cap. ii. sec. 6.

he observed a rule of life very similar to that of the Eastern anchorites. Some lived in cells made of wood, and others in the caverns which may still be seen at Marmoutier, and the casual observer passing by would probably have seen nothing in the settlement to distinguish it from any other colony of poor squatters on the banks of the Loire. Yet never in succeeding ages, in the days of its greatest celebrity, was Marmoutier so glorious as at that time. From its huts and caves missionaries went forth to become the founders and princes of that spiritual empire which was to take the place, and enlarge the boundaries, of the Roman Empire; for "Where then was there a church or city which did not aspire to possess priests from the Monastery of Martin?" These are the words of his biographer Sulpicius Severus,¹ who was as careful and conscientious a writer as he was a learned and spiritual man. He was the intimate friend of St. Martin, while his knowledge of the state of the Church at the time entitled him to form a comparative estimate of St. Martin's influence on his age. It seems clear that he regarded St. Martin as the foremost figure in that apostolic army whose conquests were then advancing from the rising to the setting of the sun, and, from the extraordinary and wide-spread devotion to St. Martin in the

¹ Cap. x. sec. 9.

Western Church, we gather that this was the general impression of his contemporaries.¹ The life of St. Martin, like that of St. Patrick, is one continued challenge to unbelief. He was an illiterate man ;² he wrote nothing : he does not appear to have given any special rules or laws to his disciples, and yet he founded an empire. The fact remains, although reason cannot explain it. If it was able to do so, it might perhaps produce the same results, whereas, as a candid infidel writer acknowledges, no philosopher has ever yet succeeded in correcting the morals of a single village. We know that St. Martin did an immeasurable work. If we are asked what was the secret of his success, the character of the man is our only answer. He was born in Hungary, of heathen parents, about the year 315, and at the age of ten we find him, as it were, forcing his way into the Church, carrying Heaven by storm, and at twelve he was a hermit in desire. We see him as a young soldier, fearless and tranquil in the presence of the apostate Julian, or dividing his cloak with his hidden Lord at the gates of Amiens. We follow him into solitude, or again, when by a stratagem he was enticed away, captured, and set upon the episcopal throne of Tours.

¹ In France alone there are 3560 parishes dedicated to St. Martin. (*Vie de St. Martin*, La Marche, p. 670.)

² Salpicius Severus, cap. xxv. sec. 8.

We see the bishop in the long hours of the night, prostrate at the door of Avitian, until an angel roused the tyrant with the words, "Can you sleep while the servant of God lies at your threshold?" or healing the leper by his kiss in the presence of a multitude at the gates of Paris. Such as these are the facts related of St. Martin's life before men. Of that other life with God, from which he drew his strength, little is known, save that he held continual and familiar intercourse with the inhabitants of Heaven. This we learn from the following narrative in the *Dialogues* of Sulpicius Severus, in which the disciple Gallus is introduced as spokesman:—

"One day as I and Sulpicius were keeping watch at his (Martin's) door, for some hours we had sat in silence, and with great fear and trembling, much as if we were the sentinels of an angel's tabernacle; for, the door being closed, he knew not that we were outside. Meanwhile, from within we heard the murmur of voices, and at once there stole over us a sort of horror and amazement, and we were overcome by the feeling of some divine manifestation. After the lapse of about two hours, Martin joined us, and then the same Sulpicius (for no one was more familiar with him) implored him to explain the reason of that religious fear which we both acknowledged that we had felt, and also

to tell us who had been speaking with him in his cell . . . then after a long pause (for there was nothing which he could refuse to Sulpicius ; perhaps, what I am going to say may seem incredible, but I call Christ to witness that I speak the truth ; unless there be anyone so sacrilegious as to suppose that Martin was a liar), ‘I will tell you,’ he said, ‘but I beseech you that you reveal it to no one : Agnes, Thecla, and Mary were with me,’ and he described the countenance and dress of each. And he confessed that they, as well as the Apostles Peter and Paul, were his frequent visitors.”¹

Such was the master, and such were the associations of that school of sanctity and celestial wisdom into which St. Patrick entered in his twenty-second year, and the training begun under the guidance of God Himself amidst the clouds on Slemish was completed at Marmoutier. The Saint was of mature age at the time of St. Martin’s death, and, although in after years he was the companion of learned men at Lerins, and the pupil of St. Germanus, still it is plain from his writings that he was one whose learning, like that of St. Martin, was rather infused than acquired.

Our chief aim throughout this paper has been to bring St. Martin and St. Patrick together, so that the first, who is so well known, may help us to

¹ *Dialogus* ii. cap. xiii.

understand the other. In this way we get a clearer view of the Apostle of Ireland than that taken by Tillemont, who confesses that he could find no parallel to this Saint after the age of the inspired Prophets and Apostles. There is a very real sense in which this is true; but it appears to us to be mainly owing to the circumstances in which he was placed, and that we find the same mysterious resemblance to the Saints of Holy Scripture in almost as marked a manner in the life of St. Martin. There is nothing singular in the fact that the simple and unlearned should do a great and enduring work in the Church of God. Of this we have examples in St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Siena, the Curé d'Ars, and many others. That which specially distinguishes the two Saints under consideration is the fact that they were missionaries under circumstances similar to those of the Apostles. They were, in a great measure, their own witnesses. Those to whom they came were acquainted with no others, and, like the Apostles, they received individually that diversity of supernatural powers which, in later ages, have been divided amongst many. Miracles were but the credentials of their embassy from Christ, and they were less wonderful than that power which went forth with their words, and evoked an organised and enduring Church from

the simple truths of the *Credo*. We cannot explain how this was done any more than we can tell how the earth is transformed by the sun in the spring-time. The hearts of men rose up to meet them, and, as they spoke, grace came with the truth, and made the hearers one with the speaker. The record of a work like this must be sought in its results. Saints are never much given to speak of themselves, and the mystery of conversion was far beyond the comprehension of their converts. The Apostle went on his way swiftly, and the idols and temples of the Pagan went down before him; and his words fell into the hearts of men like seed into the earth, and when the fair harvest of Christian truth was seen in the wilderness, the witnesses could give no other explanation save that some one like Martin, or Patrick, had passed through the land and scattered the seed of life. Faith and humility and charity began their work: the slave learned that he was a man, and woman was invested with light and majesty from on high, for the sake of that blessed one who had brought forth the "Light of the World"; and, while all men saw the change, its origin and its course were the secret of its Author.

The mystery of grace is as unfathomable now as it was in the Apostles' time. Always and everywhere it is the earth invaded from on high,

and the mind and the language of man must ever fall short of truths which have no proportion with created natures. "I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me," is the history, not of one soul, but of all those who in different degrees "fill up what is wanting," and thus continue the life of Christ on earth. A great spiritual writer has given us the portrait of the soul of St. Martin; but were it not for St. Patrick's own writings we should have very little idea of the Saint's supernatural gifts and character. Here and there indeed in the old biographies of St. Patrick we get a glimpse of that Christ-like attractiveness which is inherent in the apostolic character: the boy Benignus, yet a Pagan, brings flowers and lays them on the breast of the sleeping Saint, and the daughters of the King are won and consecrated to Christ at the first interview. It is in incidents such as these that we recognise the writer of the *Confession*, the *Epistle to Coroticus*, and the *Lorica*, or Breast-plate, of Patrick.

This last-named composition has hitherto not received the attention it deserves, for its own sake, as well as for the light which it throws on the other writings of the Saint. It was composed and sung by St. Patrick soon after his arrival in Ireland, on the eve of that memorable contest at Tara which decided the destinies of the nation, and, considering

the circumstances, it is an almost unprecedented revelation of conscious supernatural power. What human probability of success could present itself to St. Patrick as he went on his way to meet his innumerable enemies? And yet every line of this hymn tells of one whose soul was exulting in the certainty of conquest before the battle had begun. There is a striking contrast between the tone of the *Lorica* and that of the *Confession*. In the latter the Saint is speaking of himself, and all through it bears the stamp of one who was oppressed and suffering under the burthen of the divine condescension. "Who am I," he exclaims, "or what is my prayer, O Lord, who hast disclosed to me such signs of Thy divinity?" On the other hand, in the *Lorica*, he looks only at God, and his language has in it all the strength and fire of those who wrote in days when God went before His people as a pillar of fire: or when "the stars, remaining in their order and courses, fought against Sisera".

In the first place, he assumes that all creation is ready to do him service in the cause of their common Master, and as he expresses it, he "binds" to himself "the virtue of ranks of Cherubim," "the light of the sun," "the splendour of fire," "the speed of lightning," and then as he proceeds in his canticle we observe how one idea, one passion, masters all,

and leads his own soul and all power in heaven and earth to their centre in Christ :—

“ Christ with me, Christ in the front, Christ in the rear, Christ in me !

Christ below me, Christ above me, Christ at my right, Christ at my left !

Christ in breadth, Christ in length, Christ in height !

Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me !

Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me !

Christ in every eye that sees me !

Christ in every ear that hears me ! ”

When we turn to the Saint's *Confession* we find that from his early youth God had led him in this way, and thus worked out in his soul that mysterious combination of the spirit of the Old and New Testament which so impressed his early biographers. In the following account of that strange temptation which assailed him in the desert on his way to Marmoutier, we find it was Elias whom he invoked as his intercessor with Christ :—

“ On the same night, in my sleep, Satan tempted me so fiercely that I shall remember it as long as soul and body hold together. He fell upon me like a great stone, and took away from me all power over

my limbs. Then it came into my mind, I know not how, to call upon Elias. And as I cried out, I beheld the sun rise in the heavens, and while with all my strength I continued to cry, 'Elias! Elias!' behold the splendour of his sun broke upon me, and at once relieved me from all oppression. And I believe that I was rescued by my Christ, and that his spirit cried out for me."

Again, about the time when a vision, and "the Voice of the Irish," called on him to return to their coasts, he had another mysterious communication from God, which he thus describes:—

"And on another night, whether within me or near me I know not, God knows, I heard the music of spirits within me, and I knew not who they were whom I heard, and I could not understand, until the end of the prayer, when it was said, 'Who gave His life for thee?' and so I awoke. And again I heard him praying within me, and he was, as it were, within my body, and the voice was above me—that is, above the interior man—and there he prayed earnestly with groans. And while this went on I was amazed, and wondered, and considered who it was that prayed within me; but at the end of the prayer he said that he was the spirit, and I remembered the words of the apostle saying, 'the spirit helps the weakness of our prayers, for we know not what to pray for;

but the spirit himself asketh for us with unutterable groanings, which cannot be told in words'. And again, 'the Lord is our advocate, and He asketh for us'." ¹

Extracts from the Saint's writings similar to these might be multiplied, and, although it may seem presumptuous to pass judgment upon them, we venture to say that they bear upon them the stamp of inspiration. To our minds they are the strongest evidence of the immeasurable sanctity of the Apostle of Ireland. They prepare us for all the supernatural wonders of his life, and the rude and disconnected narratives of his contemporary biographers take form and life when read by the light of his personal revelations.

Two conclusions appear to us to follow from this brief study of the character and early years of St. Patrick. In the first place, much of the obscurity which surrounds his early years is removed, and we have clear evidence of a divine vocation, and of that providential training which was the anticipation of his future greatness; the child was as wonderful as the man. Secondly, we observe that while St. Patrick's life and character fall into their place with those of certain servants of God, they, at the same time, belong to an order of things uncommon even in the lives of the Saints. Hence, when we start

¹ *Confessio*, cap. ii. secs. 9, 11.

with the undisputed evidence of the Saint's own writings, we regard the very imperfections of contemporary records as an evidence of their authenticity. When we take into account the character of the Saint, and the unprecedented rapidity of his apostolic conquests, together with the fact that it was to a heathen nation that all the wonders of his life and mission were suddenly presented, we argue that the ancient lives of St. Patrick are precisely of the stamp to be expected under the circumstances. St. Patrick's converts were like the man in the Gospel whose eyes Christ had anointed, and who could only answer, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see".

In a subsequent essay the present writer makes an attempt to meet the arguments of some of the chief modern assailants of the acts of St. Patrick. One remark, however, suggests itself here. It is well known that many Protestant writers have denied the fact of St. Patrick's mission from Pope St. Celestine, in the face of the unanimous evidence of Irish records, and that some Catholics, with no inclination to be captious, have been staggered by the fact that the *Confession* and *Epistle* are silent as regards Rome. This difficulty, if such it can be called, has evidently arisen from a superficial study of these writings. St. Patrick had no occasion to mention a fact which no one disputed. The

reference which he makes to the opposition raised against his elevation to the episcopate has no connection with the question of the Roman mission, and is plainly a specimen of that inventive humility which so often confuses the personal narratives of the Saints. His object, as he tells us, was to make "his confession before he died," and he kept to his point, although, as we have seen, his purpose was overruled, and in attempting to humble himself he has been immeasurably exalted.

The isolation, and apparent supremacy, of St. Patrick has also been urged as an argument against his connection with Rome. It is objected that an orthodox Church could not have been founded without evidence of the supervision of the Holy See. Here again we fall back on the life of the Apostle of Gaul. Sulpicius Severus makes no mention of any relations with Rome on the part of St. Martin, which is all the more remarkable in the case of a Pontiff whose influence was felt even in the courts of the Roman emperors. The truth is, that when her vicars are faithful and their flocks obedient, Rome has very little to say to either. Now it is a remarkable fact that in St. Martin's time, although heresies were rife in other nations, Gaul appears to have been quite free from them,¹ and a similar and still more lasting immunity has ever been the

¹ Card. Newman, *Development of Christian Doctrine*, ch. vi. sec. 2.

special privilege of the Church of St. Patrick. If the disciples of these Saints had gone astray in any of the common errors of the age in which they lived, then without doubt the Churches of Gaul and Ireland would have obtained the unenviable distinction of comminatory letters such as those which, in St. Patrick's time, the great St. Leo addressed to the Spanish bishops who temporised with the Priscillianists, instead of which the history of the relations of the Church of Ireland with that vigilant Pontiff is expressed in one sentence of the *Annals of Ulster*:—

“A.D. 441. *Leo ordinatus xlii. Romanæ ecclesiæ episcopus, et probatus est in fide Catolica Patricius episcopus.*”

Only nine years before this date St. Celestine had sent St. Patrick to Ireland, and when St. Leo was raised to the throne of the Apostles he found that another nation had been won to Christ, and this, not through fierce conflicts and the blood of martyrs, but, as it were, by some strange spiritual transformation. The Saints, however, easily recognise each other, and St. Leo's “approval of the faith of the Bishop Patrick” may be likened to the first meeting of St. Louis and Blessed Egidio, when, after one long embrace, they parted without a word.

Such are some of the thoughts suggested by the lives of St. Martin and St. Patrick, and when we

are gone others will find wonders yet undiscovered, in these mysterious and sublime pages. Even in this world, it is the Saints who are the real inheritors of immortality. Who is the sage or hero whose name fired our souls in youth, and whose life has borne the fierce and withering scrutiny of experience? It is only the Saints who never die. St. Martin and St. Patrick are still active and energetic, living and reigning in this world.

And so our thoughts turn from those great historic figures to the nations to whom they brought the message from on high. It may be observed that the two Saints who have obtained the first place in the hearts of the people of France and Ireland were both foreigners. This example of the supremacy of the Catholic spirit is one of the great glories of those nations, and an answer to the modern fallacy that religion is dependent upon race and national character. The men who preached the faith in these countries were not merely strangers, they were enemies and destroyers of the existing national institutions. And yet they secured, not merely the obedience, but the enthusiastic loyalty of those whom they subjugated. The traditions which mark the places where these Saints preached and baptised or prayed are evidence of popular devotion existing at the time. They tell of eyes that followed their footsteps and marked their

minutest actions, and of love that treasured up these memories. When such recollections are preserved unchanged by time, it is no great stretch of faith to believe that they are evidence of a special and abiding authority associated in some mysterious way with the spiritual destinies of a nation. From the *Life of M. Dupont*,¹ we learn how intimately the devotion to St. Martin is now connected with the great religious struggle in France, and how faith regains its purity and vigour by returning to its source. But still more mysterious is the enduring and world-wide pastoral dominion of St. Patrick; for literally the sun never sets on the empire which acknowledges the authority of the first and only Apostle of Ireland. It is an empire which has been won at a great cost; but who will say that the losses can be compared with the gains? We can number the rulers in those dominions more easily than the subjects. When we consult the Catholic Directories of Ireland, Great Britain and her Colonies, and the United States of America, we find that in the English-speaking nations of the world there are 200 bishops, with probably more than 15,000 priests, and according to some authorities not less than 20,000,000 Catholics. In this vast and steadily increasing spiritual empire, an immense majority belongs either by birth or traditions to the Church

¹ *Vie de M. Dupont*, vol. i. p. 375. Janvier. Tours, 1879.

of St. Patrick: a church which now bears with it the promise of triumph in the future, since in the past it has never even so much as listened to the voice of heresy or schism. It is to faith that victory over the world is promised. Wealth, Literature and the Arts are the Church's vassals—powerful indeed, but fickle and treacherous in so far as they are the creatures and slaves of popularity and fashion; and amongst the many lessons for which we have to thank St. Martin and St. Patrick there is none more triumphant than the evidence they bring, that the Church, like her Master, is “Free amongst the dead,” and has no need of any of those things which men can take away.

Works Consulted.—*Sulpicii Severi, de B. Martini Vita, Epistolæ, et Dialogi.* Lipsiæ: 1719. 2. *Vie de Saint Martin.* Par A. L. DE LA MARCHE. Tours: 1581. 3. *Histoire de l'Abbaye de Marmoutier.* Par Dom. EDMOND MARTÈNE. Tours: Ed. Chevallier. 1874. 4. *Notre-Dame des Sept-Dormants, à Marmoutier.* Par B. TH. POÜAN. Tours: 1881. 5. *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Noyers.* Tours: Ed. Chevallier. 1872. 6. *Book of Armagh.* 7. *Confessio et Epistola Sancti Patricii.* 8. *Triadis Thaumaturga; seu divorum Patricii, Columbæ, et Brigidæ acta.* Lovanii: Colganus. 1647. 9. *Archæological Dissertation on the Birthplace of St. Patrick.* By the Rev. DUNCAN MACNAB. Dublin: 1866. (*Dublin Review*, Jan., 1883.)

CHAPTER II.

ADRIAN IV. AND HENRY PLANTAGENET.

I.

“I can judge but poorly of anything, whilst
I measure it by no other standard than itself.”

—*Edmund Burke.*

It is still a debated question whether Adrian IV. was in any way concerned with the Norman incursion into Ireland in the twelfth century. The present contribution to the controversy is an attempt to approach the subject in a somewhat different manner from that usually adopted. No one pretends that the positive evidence for the authenticity of the “Bull of Adrian IV.” is conclusive. The popular credence which it has obtained is mainly owing to an impression that the Church in Ireland in the twelfth century was corrupt and disorganised; and that an English Pope was likely to favour the designs of a Norman king. These prepossessions have long held their ground owing to the fact that the vast majority of modern writers on this question have drawn their

information from writers of the period who have been either foreign or hostile. By this I do not mean that these middle-age writers, and their modern commentators, have all been intentionally antagonistic. Some were far removed from every suspicion, save that which attaches to our common fallible humanity ; and, like many good men now-a-days, they would have been just to Ireland if they only knew how. The following is a brief inquiry into the characters of those concerned in the supposed transaction, followed by an attempt to find out what were the opinions of Irishmen in the twelfth century regarding a matter about which it is impossible to suppose that they could be indifferent.

Many are the perplexing and apparently hopeless controversies which long since would have been brought to a satisfactory termination if, as Edmund Burke advises, we tried to look at the inside of things by the help of light borrowed from without. Indeed, certain questions are so obscured by time, or distorted by sectarian or political fanaticism, that it is not too much to say, that without collateral illustration they cannot be measured at all.

All these elements of obscurity are found in the controversy which rages round the document by which Pope Adrian IV. is supposed to have made over Ireland to Henry Plantagenet. The historical

period into which it leads us was one in which great political contests aroused the fiercest passions, and coloured the records of the age, and it is the strange fate of Ireland that the struggles which began in the twelfth century are still drawn out. This is principally owing to the fact that, with the advent of Protestantism, a new race of rulers stepped into the shoes of the old. Throughout the long struggle which has supervened, we must confess that the balance of prudence and sagacity has been on the side of the stranger. No seemingly weak point in the Catholic fortress has escaped observation. Amongst others, the supposed donation of Pope Adrian, which in Catholic times was well nigh unnoticed and disregarded, has now become one of the favourite themes of the orators and historians of Bible Societies, Orange Lodges, and all such kindred associations, whether open or secret, whose aim is to foster division, and foment disloyalty in the Church. There was another element of confusion in those days which deserves consideration. It was an age when the lawless ambition of kings found itself face to face with a spiritual power against which force was vain. Hence, there never was a period when fraud was more active and wide-spread in the dealings of sovereigns with the Holy See, or more likely to be successful, owing to the disturbed state of Italy, and the consequent difficulties of com-

munication. It was an age of forgeries, and therefore the Papal documents of that period must be scrutinised with care as great as that which St. Jerome and St. Leo expended on fabricated Gospels and Epistles. In the present instance a great part of this work has been already done by Cardinal Moran, and by a learned writer in the *Analecta juris Pontificii*,¹ but it has occurred to the present writer that some further light may be thrown upon this most interesting subject, by expanding arguments drawn from the history of the period, and examining the characters of the chief actors in this mysterious drama.

The story of the transaction is briefly as follows: In the year 1155, immediately on his accession to the Pontificate, Adrian IV. is supposed to have written a private letter to the young king of England, then in his twenty-second year. In this letter, which will be given later on, there is not one word which suggests the idea of temporal domination, as the word *dominus*, which occurs once in the text, is common to ecclesiastical and secular documents. The letter is entirely devoted to ecclesiastical business, which

¹ *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Nov., 1872. *Analecta*, May, 1882. The writer in the *Analecta* has rather weakened his argument by laying too much stress on one favourite theory, thus exposing his flank, which has been assailed more furiously than successfully by the Rev. Sylvester Malone. (See *Dublin Review*, April, 1884.)

is one of the most cogent arguments against its authenticity.

Although in the course of this discussion we shall have to consider the comparative state of religion in England and Ireland in the year 1155, we may here draw attention to the following fact: "Pope Eugenius III. sent John Paparo, a Priest and Cardinal, with the title of 'St. Laurence in Damasus,' to Ireland in 1152, as Legate, with four palliums for the four Archbishops of Armagh, Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam. The Legate assembled a Council at which he presided with Christian O'Conarchy, Bishop of Lismore, and Apostolic Legate after the death of St. Malachy."¹ Now Adrian IV. had been the disciple, and one of the favourite ministers of Eugenius III.; he could not be ignorant of, and was not likely to be indifferent to, the honours paid by his predecessor to the Irish hierarchy. Three years later, however, we are told that he sent a commission to a young layman, the king of a nation, which was itself apparently on the verge of schism, by which the said king was authorised to reform the Irish Church. Moreover the spiritual powers with which this king was invested were practically unlimited and probably more absolute than had ever been entrusted to any Papal Legate; for all pre-existing ecclesiastical authority

¹ MacGeoghegan, *Hist. of Ireland*, p. 235.

was so completely ignored that no notice of the mission of the lay plenipotentiary was given to the Papal Legate and Bishops of Ireland. In the "Bull" the Pope is supposed to congratulate the king on his wish "to extend the boundaries of the Church; to announce the *truths of the Christian Faith*"; and, finally, to "Be zealous in moulding that nation according to the principles of good morality, *and take measures as well on your own part as well as by those whom you may employ, and who by their faith, doctrine, and life shall recommend themselves to your judgment, so that the Church in those parts may be adorned and the religion of the Christian Faith planted and developed.*" Here, then, I repeat, we find the Vicar of Christ ignoring not only the presence of his own Legate, but the very existence of Christianity, in a country which at the time possessed a well-organised Hierarchy, and innumerable Religious Communities. We shall return to these incongruities, and absurd exaggerations in the text of the "Bull," when we have taken a glance at the characters of the chief personages whose names have been identified with this transaction.

Henry Plantagenet was another Henry VIII. born before his time, and as such he has had many admirers and apologists. He never cut himself off from the Church, and hence even

Catholic writers seem to have been deceived by his nominal Catholicity. But it must be borne in mind that in those days heresy and schism were impolitic and dangerous tastes even in kings, some of whom, according to the maxims of St. Bernard, would have done less harm to the Church if they had thrown off the mask of Catholicity, and come out in their true character as heretics.

Our object now is to give the reader some idea of the public and private character of this personage from his youth upwards; and especially at the period when the Sovereign Pontiff is supposed to have intrusted him with so delicate and sacred a mission. In 1152, three years before this time, Henry, then Duke of Normandy, had married Eleanor of Aquitaine, who brought to him as her dowry seven of the richest provinces of France. The previous marriage of Eleanor with Louis VII., King of France, had been declared null by the French Bishops, and this without reference to the Holy See, to which such cases were reserved by the Canon Law; but such was her shameless profligacy that the chivalrous French king was glad to get rid of her even at the loss of the best part of his kingdom. Six weeks after the separation Henry, then only nineteen years of age, married the outcast queen, having been, as it was said, in collusion with her,

and directing her in the affair of the separation.¹ As we proceed we shall find, on the authority of St. Thomas of Canterbury, that the dispositions of the young and powerful Duke of Normandy had already aroused grave apprehensions at the court of Rome, and the suspicions of Henry's foul play fit in with the character of one of whom, later on, Cardinal Vivian, the Roman Legate, said: "Never did I witness this man's equal in lying," while the king of France declared to Henry's ambassadors that "their master was so full of fraud and deceit that it was impossible to keep faith with him."²

There is something revolting in the process of digging up and gibbeting one so long dead and buried, and if Henry's crimes and frauds were also dead and buried it might be our duty to draw a veil over them; but when we find that his duplicity and evil deeds are perpetuated in their consequences, then charity to many calls for justice upon one, even though his frauds had done no more than

¹ Rohrbacher, vol. xxvi. p. 45. Martin, *Hist. de France*, vol. iii. p. 462. The popular tradition that St. Bernard said of Henry: "From the devil he came and to the devil he will go," is at any rate an evidence of the estimation in which Henry was held, even at this early age; as St. Bernard died A.D. 1153. Henry's misdeeds were then confined to his French territories, as he did not obtain the crown of England until 1154.

² Lingard, *Hist. of Eng.* vol. ii. p. 106 (n).

pollute the fountains of that Christian history, which is the family history of the civilised world.

The most damning evidence against Henry is to be found in the *Epistles* of St. Thomas of Canterbury. The Saint had known the king from his youth. Roger of Pontigny, a contemporary, gives the following account of the reasons which in the first instance induced Archbishop Theobald, the English Primate, to introduce St. Thomas to the young king :—

“At that time, to wit, the year eleven hundred and fifty-four from the Incarnation of the Lord, when Henry, the son of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, and of Matilda the Empress, succeeded to his ancestral kingdom, many disturbances, and a great thirst for novelties arose in England, and no slight fear took hold of the Church of that country, as well because of the suspicious age of the king, as from the notorious malignity of his family in their dealings with the rights of ecclesiastical liberty. Not without cause, indeed, as the end made manifest. Now, the Archbishop of Canterbury, anxious about the present, and fearing for the future, reflected how it might counteract those impending evils which he dreaded, and it seemed to him that peace and tranquillity might be secured for the English Church if Thomas could obtain a place amongst the advisers of the king.” John of Salisbury, also a

contemporary, in his *Life of St. Thomas*, gives identically the same account of Henry's character at this period. "He (Archbishop Theobald) suspected the youth of the king, while he dreaded the evil effects of the folly and malice of the young and depraved men who were apparently his councillors." William of Canterbury, also probably a contemporary, writes in the same style, and describes the "malice of the king's designs" at the very outset of his reign, as well as the boldness of his ministers in "conspiring to strip the Church of her possessions."

It is well known that Archbishop Theobald succeeded in his wise design; but the "peace and tranquillity" which he hoped for were only obtained when the voice of the martyr's blood ascended to heaven.

Henry made St. Thomas Chancellor of England in 1155, the first year of his reign, which began in the December of 1154. No one was more intimate with Henry or knew him better, and in 1170, when in exile, St. Thomas wrote to Pope Alexander III. the touching letter which begins, "O my father, my soul is in bitterness." It is quite clear from this document that the Archbishop was no match for the king in diplomacy; but the point which concerns our argument is the evidence it affords that Henry's precocious ambition and lawless erastianism were well known in Rome even before

he ascended the English throne. The opponents of St. Thomas asserted that the king's policy was inspired by a mere personal hatred of the Archbishop. "From the very first day of his accession to power," answers the Saint, "he has stretched out his hand against the liberties of the Church, as if they were his own hereditary right. Was I Archbishop when his father barred his dominions against the Nuncios of the blessed Eugenius? Was I Archbishop when Gregory, Cardinal Deacon of St. Angelo, foreseeing the tyranny of this man, persuaded the Lord Eugenius to permit¹ the coronation of Eustace, the son of King Stephen, saying that it was easier to hold a ram by the horns than a lion by the tail? You know this history."

There is another sentence in this letter which suggests an argument against the "Bull," which, as far as I know, has not been noticed. The legal acuteness and subtilty of Henry's mind was well understood by the Saint, and, with apostolic boldness, he warns the Pope that concessions made to the king would certainly be used as precedents.² Now, the supposed "Bull" of Adrian IV. invested Henry with those very powers over the Church in Ireland for which he was contending in England; it

¹ *Ep. St. Th.*, A.D. 1170. Rolls Collection, vol. vii. p. 242.

² *Vitae, et Epist. S. Thomae*, Migne, Patrol. vol. cxc. pp. 61, 197, 233, 467.

is not likely, therefore, that he would have neglected to publish and make use of so striking a precedent, if, as is said, he had the "Bull" in his keeping during the many years of his contest with St. Thomas.

Our next step leads us to consider the character of the Pope who is supposed to have sent so very questionable an agent to reform the Irish Church.

There are some who gravely argue, that as Adrian IV. was an Anglo-Saxon, it was natural that he should desire to see the Church in Ireland governed according to the principles in vogue in England under the Normans. The real truth, however, is that, humanly speaking, the Pope's nationality is one of the strongest arguments against such a supposition. Adrian came of a patient and gentle race, and, as Father of all Christians, the Normans in England were his children; but, in this case, the history of his miserable country, lit up by his own personal experience, must have taught him that a rapacious and lawless Norman king was the last man in Europe in whom the Vicar of Christ could repose confidence, and Pope Adrian had had better opportunities even than Roger of Pontigny for observing the "notorious malignity" of Henry and his race in their dealings with the Church.

The term "Saxon," as applied to the invaders

by Irish writers, is one of those traditional perversions of language which does so much in perpetuating historical delusions. The men who came over with Strongbow and Henry II. were the conquerors of the Anglo-Saxon, and their iron-handed despotism weighed far more heavily upon them than upon the Irish; and for proof of this we need go no further than the life of Pope Adrian himself. England and Ireland were common sufferers, as they had hitherto been united by a bond of friendship almost unparalleled amongst nations. Venerable Bede, the greatest historian of the Anglo-Saxon, gives us a touching record of those kindly relations which continued unbroken until the arrival of the Normans.

As early as the year 664 he writes:—

“ Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there (in Ireland) at that time, who in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of Divine studies, or of a more continent life; and some of them presently devoted themselves to a monastical life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master’s cell to another. The Scots (Irish) willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with food, as also to furnish

them with books to read, and their teaching gratis.”¹

St. Aldhelm, who died 709, says that the English went to Ireland “numerous as bees.” In the next century the English Alcuin came to study in Ireland, perhaps in that “Saxon Quarter” at Armagh, whose name remained as evidence of centuries of hospitality;² and when the Danes brought desolation on the altars and homes of both countries, the common sorrow had become another bond of union. It is true that at the time of the Norman invasion Ireland was full of English slaves. Henry II. is said to have made their liberation one of his pretexts for entering Ireland, and in 1171 the Council of Armagh ordered them to be set at liberty; but the unhappy English knew well that it was the sellers rather than the buyers who were responsible for this enormity.

Nicholas Breakspeare was the son of a servant attached to the Abbey of St. Alban’s, or, according to another account, of a beggar who lived on the alms distributed at the gates of the Abbey. His name, a compound of two Saxon words,³ as well as

¹ *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. iii. ch. 27. Ed. Giles.

² The Age of Christ, 1155. Maelmuire MacGillachidrain, Airchinneach (prefect) of the Fort of the Guests of Christ at Ard-Macha. (*Annals of the Four Masters*.)

³ The name Breakspeare is a compound of the two Saxon words *breccan-spere*. See Johnson.

his condition, reveals his race. His father was subsequently received as a member of the community, while his son continued to subsist on the charity of the religious; in fact he was evidently of the class known in Ireland as "poor scholars." We are told that his father was indignant, and reproached him with his cowardice. From this it would seem that he wished his son to adopt the military profession. Nicholas, however, was reluctant to do so, but it is plain from the history of his life that it was not courage which was wanting. Military service in England at that time was not likely to suit the tastes of young Breakspeare. There was little to choose between the service of the king and that of the nobles, who in Stephen's reign had raised and fortified as many as one hundred and twenty-six castles in different parts of England. From the Norman conquest, 1066, to the death of Stephen, 1154, the ancient race in England were ground down by tyranny almost unexampled in history; and if in the reign of Henry II. the people began to lift their heads under the leadership of St. Thomas, it was mainly owing to the moral dignity with which the Anglo-Saxon was invested when, in the person of Adrian IV., one of his despised race became Vicar of Christ and Arbiter of Europe. The following are some of Lingard's expressions in his history of the period: "William Rufus had de-

graded the dignities of the Church by prostituting them to the highest bidder," and the work was continued by the "royal rapacity" of Henry I. As might be expected, when the Church was enslaved the poor found no protection. "God knows," says Eadmer, the Saxon chronicler, quoted by Lingard, "how unjustly this miserable people is dealt with. First, they are deprived of their property, and then they are put to death. If a man possesses anything it is taken from him : if he has nothing he is left to perish by famine." Under Stephen, the immediate predecessor of Henry II., things were still worse. "Never did England, since the invasion of the Danes, present such a scene of misery. The abbeys were converted into castles . . . the cruelty of these *barbarians* brought its own punishment. By the flight of the husbandmen from the neighbourhood of the castles the lands were left barren . . . the fugitives usually retired to some of the ecclesiastical establishments, where they built their miserable hovels against the walls of the church, and begged a scanty pittance from the charity of the clergy or monks."¹ The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, published by Giles, with Venerable Bede's History, gives even a more appalling picture :—

¹ *Hist. of England*, vol. ii. pp. 6, 16, 40, 95. We shall have to revert to the meaning of *barbarian*, as used by Lingard.

“Men and women they (the barons) put in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with pains unspeakable, for never were any martyrs tormented as these were. They hung some up by their feet, and smoked them with foul smoke; some by their thumbs or by the head, and they hung burning things on their feet. They put a knotted string about their heads and twisted it till it went into the brain.”

Then there was the “Cruchet-house” for pounding men into jelly, and the “Sachenteges” or gallows for living victims. The same writer adds :—

“The bishops and clergy were ever cursing them, but this to them was nothing, for they were all accursed, and forsworn, and reprobate.”¹

It is not wonderful that as an Englishman, a scholar, and a Christian, Nicholas Breakspeare should have shrunk from the service of such masters, so he left his native country to look for work in other lands. We next hear of him as a servant in the employment of the Canons Regular of the Monastery of Saint-Ruf, near Avignon, then as a Religious, and, finally, Superior of the Monastery. The chronology of this period of his life can only be a matter of conjecture. He was Superior in the first years of the Pontificate of Eugenius III. (1145 to 1153), and it is probable that

¹ P. 502-4.

it was before his election, when he was a simple Religious, that he attended the lectures of Marianus, a celebrated Irish scholar, who was Professor of the Liberal Arts in Paris. The Canons of Saint-Ruf may have been good men, but they were not prepared to scale the rugged heights of perfection to the ascent of which their new Superior invited them, and so strong was the opposition that at length they carried their complaints to Pope Eugenius. The Pontiff was much struck with the wisdom and modesty of Breakspeare, and perceiving that the fault lay with the Religious, he persuaded them to submit, and sent them back in peace. Again the rebellion broke out, and a second time they appealed to the Pope, who gave judgment in the following words : “ I perceive where the throne of Satan is set up, and whence the storm comes. So vile a flock shall no longer possess so great a man. Go, and choose a father with whom you can live at ease ; this man shall not trouble you any more.”¹ And on the spot the Pope created him Cardinal, and nominated him to the Bishopric of Albano. Baronius adds that the appointment was made with the unanimous consent of the Bishops then in Rome.² As the reign of Eugenius only lasted eight years, we must place the elevation of Nicholas

¹ Ciaconus, *Hist. Rom. Pont.*, i. p. 1057.

² Baronius, *Annales*, A.D. 1154-5.

Breakspeare to the Cardinalate early in this Pontificate, to give time for the great works which he accomplished, and for the world-wide reputation which he acquired. We hear of him as Legate in Norway and the neighbouring countries, where "he diligently instructed the people in the Christian faith,"¹ with such success as to merit the title of "Apostle of Norway and Denmark." These events are recorded by all his biographers, but there must have been other reasons nearer home to account for the universal love and veneration of the Court and people of Rome, which led to his elevation to the Papacy. We may also take it for granted that he was weighed in the balance by St. Bernard, whose inspired wisdom was still the guide of his spiritual son, Pope Eugenius.² The ancient writer, quoted by Baronius, tells us that the cardinals and bishops assembled in St. Peter's were unanimous in the election of Adrian IV., he himself being the only one who resisted, and that the people broke out into shouts of joy at the announcement. He adds that Adrian was a man of great tenderness of heart, meek and patient, eloquent, a cheerful and generous giver, and distinguished by a singular majesty of demeanour. These qualities were all that were

¹ Baronius, *loc. cit.*

² *Amor dominum nescit agnoscat filium et in infulis.* (*De Consideratione, Prolog.*)

necessary to endear him to the people ; but it is plain from the many letters of this Pontiff, which are preserved, that he had other gifts even more necessary in the wild and lawless age in which he was called to rule the Church. That "vehement spirit which rebukes and thunders," which St. Bernard salutes in Eugenius III., is found, if possible, intensified in the disciple and minister, whom, from the first, Eugenius had recognised as one of that race of giants to which he himself belonged. Frederick of Germany and William of Sicily were doomed to experience emotions similar to those of the religious of St. Ruf, on Adrian's first administration of the rod of spiritual empire. The Emperor seeks to evade the ancient custom which obliged him to serve as the Pope's equerry, and hold his stirrup, and Adrian refuses him the kiss of peace until the homage has been paid in the presence of the assembled chivalry of Germany. In those days all men understood that the contest lay between the representatives of moral and brute force, and the friendless and the oppressed of every nation had a share in the triumph of the spiritual power over the master of seventy thousand lances. Frederick attempts to force the bishops in his dominions to take the feudal oath, whereupon Adrian sends him a comminatory letter : "We have learned," he writes, "from the mouth of truth

itself, that whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled. . . . What shall we say of that fidelity which you have promised and sworn to the Blessed Peter and to us? How have you observed it?—seeing that you demand the homage of bishops who are gods and sons of the Most High.” (Ps. lxxxi.)¹

It is remarkable that the “Bulls” of Adrian IV., preserved in the Bullarium, are chiefly concerned with the defence of the ecclesiastical privileges and possessions of monasteries against the encroachments of the civil power, so frequent in those days. It seems to have been the work which, above all others, he had at heart, as was natural in one who could look back to the day when he himself was numbered amongst the starving multitude which owed life itself to the protection and charity of the monks of St. Albans.

Our next step leads us to investigate the grounds of the accusation that Ireland, in the twelfth century, had lapsed into barbarism, and had so far lost her place in the Christian commonwealth that the Pope was in a way compelled to come to her rescue. The manner in which this indictment has been put together is simple, and well calculated, at first sight, to produce a vivid impression. The history of the period has been submitted to a process of distillation, and, with the

¹ Baronius, *Annales*, A.D. 1159.

historical sediment, a sort of Newgate Calendar of middle-age Irish history has been elaborated, in some such way as Ireland's history of to-day is extracted from "murder-trials." Writers who run their eyes over the meagre entries of one of the ancient annals of Ireland, and then tell us that they have mastered the then social condition of the country, remind one of Sydney Smith's French Juris-consult, who was sent over to England to acquire knowledge of its criminal law, and "who declared himself thoroughly informed upon the subject after remaining precisely two-and-thirty minutes in the Old Bailey." No modern writer saw deeper into Irish history than Professor O'Curry. He possessed at once that knowledge of the ancient history of Ireland, and that genius which enabled him to live in the past, and converse with the dead, as intimately as Cardinal Newman communes with Athanasius and Augustine. Again and again the great Celtic scholar warns the student that the annals of ancient Ireland are a skeleton without flesh and blood, and we may add, that they are a skeleton whose bones are both broken and scattered. He tells us that the history of Pagan Ireland will never be understood until those bones are put together, and clothed with flesh and blood, taken from the immense collection of materials supplied by the

historic tales and poems, and the records of her laws, manners, and customs. The history of Christian Ireland imperatively demands a similar treatment. Although literature was vigorously cultivated in Ireland down to the time of the Norman incursion, we cannot say much for Irish historians. The speculative, and, at the same time, impetuous Celtic spirit had little in it of that meditative character so necessary for the historian, which distinguishes the Venerable Bede. As, therefore, we enter into the spirit of Pagan times with the aid of the bards, so we must supplement the annals of Christian Ireland with matter drawn from the lives and writings of the Saints, who, during the long ages of faith, were the chief representatives of all that was pure and exalted in the life and aspirations of Christian nations. This process of historical illumination has been going on for some time in England, where the political obscurity of Catholicity shelters it from the outrages of bigotry, and the heroism and purity of characters, like St. Thomas of Canterbury, and Mary Stuart, now adorn the pages of unsectarian Protestants of the school of Hurrell Froude, and Agnes Strickland.

We have seen how much light is thrown upon the English side of our subject by a glance at the private life of Adrian IV., and the relations of St. Thomas with Henry Plantagenet: we shall now

attempt a similar process of illustration in the case of Ireland. No one denies that blood ran freely in Ireland in the twelfth century. It is hard to form an estimate of the importance of the battles which were so frequent; but it may well be questioned whether the effects of these conflicts on the population of that country was as destructive as the process of cruel extermination, on the part of the Normans in England, which is recorded by Saxon chroniclers. Moreover, if we substitute knights and barons for princes and chieftains, we shall find that the same freedom of private warfare was the rule everywhere in Europe. At the same time, in no other country was the religious character so sacred and the utterances of ecclesiastics so free as in Ireland. In Pagan times the rights of sanctuary had been carried to an unparalleled extent, and the Church entered into possession of this ancient usage; so that while chieftains fought at the gates of the monasteries the monks were quietly writing their reports. Before the Danish invasion, Irish wars did not touch sacred persons.¹ There is little doubt that we should have heard of equally distressing scenes in other countries, if the Church was in the enjoyment of a similar freedom. In England one churchman spoke in defiance of the king, and ere

¹ O'Curry : *Manners and Customs of Ancient Irish*, 1. v. clv. Also, *Ancient Church of Ireland*, Dr. Gargan, p. 41.

long his brains, scattered on the pavement of the sanctuary in his own cathedral, were the seal of his testimony regarding the slavery of the Church in England.

“Do you pretend not to be aware,” writes St. Thomas, “that the king of England has already usurped, and day by day continues to usurp, the possessions of the Church? While he overthrows her liberties, he has stretched forth his hand against the Lord’s anointed; everywhere, and without exception, he has assailed ecclesiastics. Some he has put in prison, others he has slain, or torn out their eyes, or forced to fight in single combat, or to pass through the ordeal of fire or water.”¹

When we enquire what was the state of Ireland, religious and social, in the year 1155, it seems that there ought to be no great difficulty in answering the question. We have the testimony of many contemporary writers, whose dispassionate truthfulness is manifest. But when we compare these writers one with another, or even with themselves, we are met by statements which at first sight appear contradictory. A little consideration will explain the reason. There were two nations in Ireland. The Northmen or Danes were scattered throughout the country. The process of amalgamation of this half-heathen population with the native

¹ *Epist. Ad omnes Cardinales.* Migne, vol. cxc. p. 489.

race was slow, and, moreover, it was continually interrupted by the arrival of recruits from the teeming human storehouse of the North, who imported false doctrines and heathen manners into a country which since St. Patrick's time had ever identified Catholic faith with its national existence. Ireland has had to bear the shame of these abuses, and her ancient annalists give us very little help in distinguishing how far they were to be attributed to foreign importation. They appear to have been impressed with the same conviction as Dr. Johnson, that "all the colouring, all the philosophy of history, is conjecture." They were content to note the heads of the principal events in each year as they came under their own observation, and however much the student of Irish history may admire their stern simplicity, he cannot help regretting that they did not do more to forestall the conjectures of the historical word-painters and special pleaders of our own times.

It is a curious fact that but for the testimony of foreign ecclesiastical historians we should be almost in the dark regarding the work of Irish missionaries in the sixth and seventh centuries. In the *Four Masters*, from the birth of St. Columba, A.D. 515, to the death of St. Columbanus, A.D. 615, we find only two short notices of the former Saint, while the latter is altogether passed over. How different

would the monotonous narrative read if it were lit up with the names and the bright record of the deeds of those daring soldiers of Christ, whom St. Bernard describes as pouring forth "like a rushing torrent upon distant nations." It is to the same Saint also that we owe the description of the Monastery at Bangor, in Down, "that place so truly holy and the Mother of Saints," from where, as he tells us, Luanus departed to found a hundred monasteries.¹ This reticence of Irish writers is best explained on the supposition that Irish missionary enterprise was then as much an every-day occurrence as emigration is in our times, and that it passed unnoticed in an age when men were not so prone as they are at present to expatiate on their own heroic deeds. The same silence of unconscious greatness rests upon the origins of the monastic foundations of the period which we are now considering. The traveller who finds his own way amongst the majestic ruins of the many Cistercian Abbeys of Ireland from Mellifont to Kyrie Eleison, and then turns to the annals of the country at the period of these foundations, only to find a few notices of the accessions and deaths of provincial kings, or the battles of county clans, is forced to conclude that the history of Ireland has yet to be written, and that it is from the chronicles

¹ *Vita Sti. Malachie*, cap. iv.

and traditions of the various religious orders that the most important information is to be obtained.

II.

“I rather suspect that vices are feigned or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in their punishment. An enemy is a bad witness : a robber is a worse.”—*Edmund Burke.*

THE religious condition of Ireland in the age of Adrian IV. is the main point in this part of our inquiry, as the reform of the Irish Church, under the supervision of Henry Plantagenet, was, according to the “Bull” itself, the sole motive which influenced the Pope. In furtherance of the king’s designs such an idea would seem both religious and plausible. National perfection is never more than comparative. It is vain to attempt a process of canonisation in the case of any people, and it is doubly so in that of an ancient Catholic nation. Our forefathers did not publish reports of their virtues and charities : they were more concerned with confessing their own sins and rebuking those of others. Indeed the spirit of the Publican in the Gospel is always the characteristic of nations accustomed to the Confessional, as it was also that of the Hebrew Prophets. In the case of Ireland all that we can do is to try to discover the real gravity and extent of the faults which were confessed and condemned, as well as their comparative

enormity when weighed against the sins of other nations.

We shall begin with the evidence of St. Bernard. No ancient writer on Ireland has been more misunderstood: his veracity is unimpeachable, but his style is that of the orator rather than the historian. The only way, therefore, in which we can understand the force of his language is by measuring it by the facts which he relates. It is strange that an historian so accomplished and generally so dispassionate as Dr. Lingard should have been misled by St. Bernard's eloquence. It can only be explained by his own confession, that he accepted Giraldus Cambrensis as his commentator on the Saint's writings, although he candidly premises, "That the credulity of the Welshman (Giraldus) was often deceived by fables is evident; nor is it improbable that this partiality might occasionally betray him into unfriendly and exaggerated statements."

But for all that he adds in a note:—

• "I have attentively perused the *Cambrensis Eversus* of Lynch, a work of much learning and ingenuity. In several instances he may have overturned the statements of Girald; in the more important points he has completely failed. The charge of barbarism, so frequently and forcibly brought forward by St. Bernard, could be neither repelled

nor evaded. His principal resource has been to insinuate that it should be confined to a small district, though his authority describes it as general (*per universam Hiberniam . . . ubique*, *Vit. Malach.*, 1937), and to contend that it was eradicated by St. Malachy, though the contrary is proved by incontestable evidence.”¹

¹ *Hist. Eng.* vol. ii. p. 172. Giraldus Cambrensis has been edited under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, by Dr. Brewer and Rev. James F. Dimock. Of the *Expugnatio Hiberniae*, the chief work of Giraldus on Irish affairs, Dr. Brewer observes, “Giraldus regarded his subject rather as a great epic, which undoubtedly it was, than a sober relation of facts occurring in his own days.” The editing of those treatises of Giraldus which relate to Ireland fell to the lot of Mr. Dimock, who devotes a considerable portion of his Preface to an examination of their value as histories. The following are some of his observations. “To prove their unfairness would take a large volume.” “His history of the English Invasion must have been wholly derived from the English themselves.” “Giraldus was replete with the exact qualities, the very reverse of what are needed to form an impartial historian . . . he had not an idea that anything he thought or said could by any chance be wrong.” . . . He also points out that Giraldus makes no secret that he wrote for a purpose. In his letter to King John prefixed to the second edition of the *Expugnatio*, he reminds the king how he had been sent into Ireland by his father, “the glorious and magnificent King Henry,” and that he had spent three years in the composition of a work *On the Wonders of Ireland, and in honour of his father (In patris vestri laudem)*. *Opera Giraldi*. vol. v.; Pref. pp. lxiii. to lxx., and p. 405.

The annals of literature can hardly produce anything more destructive than Mr. Dimock's criticisms. All honour is due to him for his work; but it may well be asked why our Government should go to such trouble and expense in publishing the so-called historical writings of a foreigner who “draws on his imagination for his facts,” while the real history of Ireland lies mouldering in the libraries of Trinity College, the Royal Irish Academy, and the British Museum.

If Dr. Lingard had himself studied St. Bernard's life of St. Malachy, he would have found that if the Saint (cap. x.) gives a gloomy account of the state of things in Ireland before St. Malachy's time, in another place he declares that St. Malachy restored the Church in Ireland to its pristine splendour. On both occasions he uses the same word "everywhere" (*ubique*), and if he is an authority for one fact he is equally so for the other. He tells that at the age of thirty-eight St. Malachy was appointed "Archbishop of Armagh and Metropolitan of all Ireland," and that "within the space of three years . . . the Church was set free; foreign customs repudiated, and Christian morals everywhere reformed." (Cap. xii. and xiv.)

One expression used by St. Bernard in describing the prevalent evils is very significant. He speaks of a "sort of Paganism (*paganismus quidam*) introduced under the name of Christianity." It is plain that he here alludes to the Pagan customs of the Northmen, or Danes, and when some future historian of the stamp of Dr. Lingard shall have devoted his life to the study of the history of ancient Ireland, he will probably be able to trace the abuses which St. Bernard so justly anathematised back to the day in the year 843 when Turgesius, "the leader of the Northmen, the destroyer of a hundred churches, and the murderer of some

thousands of priests and ecclesiastics," usurped the title of Abbot of Armagh, while his wife, like a precursor of Queen Elizabeth, was appointed supreme head of the great ecclesiastical city of Clonmacnois.¹

The nation which has lost all save honour may well be jealous of its sole remaining inheritance, and generous minds in England as well as in Ireland are beginning to feel this. When nations in peaceful possession of themselves surrender their sacred trusts and rights, they must bear the shame of their apostacy and treason. No one has ever said that this was the sin of Ireland. When rightly understood, the very evils which St. Bernard records only make more manifest the almost unparalleled religious vitality of the Church of St. Patrick, and the enduring religious struggles of his children ought to win the admiration of all who value the prize for which they contended.

But to return to Dr. Lingard, and the charge of barbarism which he says "could be neither repelled nor evaded". In the first place it should be observed that in the pages of a Latin writer like St. Bernard the primary meaning of the word, derived from the Greek, is "foreign," and was originally applied to the Romans themselves.² It is manifest

¹ O'Curry, *MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History*, p. 400. *Annals of the Masters. Anno 843.*

² Plato divides mankind into Barbarians and Hellenes.

from the context that it is in this sense that St. Bernard uses it; for while it is easy to understand how, "in the space of three years," St. Malachy could eradicate foreign imported abuses, it is incredible that in so short a time he could have civilised the whole nation. As we have seen (p. 80), Dr. Lingard himself applies the epithet "barbarian" to the Normans in England, and the picture which he gives of their disregard of every law, human and divine, certainly makes the expression much stronger in his pages than in those of St. Bernard. Under their rule, as we learn from the Life of St. Wulston, and the Decrees of the Council of London, the unhappy natives were sold "like brute beasts,"¹ but for all that it can hardly be supposed that Dr. Lingard intended to include the whole race of conquerors in this opprobrious category.

The importance of St. Bernard's evidence can hardly be exaggerated. Of all the external, or foreign observers, whose testimony we possess on the Irish affairs of that period, he is one of the few whose honesty is above suspicion. Day by day the inventions of Giraldus Cambrensis are evaporating in the crucibles of honest investigators in England as well as in Ireland. Mathew Paris, who turns out to be Roger Wendover, whose writings he appropriated; Ralf de Diceto; Roger de Hoveden,

¹ Sicut bruta animalia. Mansi, Collect. Concil., 1102.

&c., are nothing more than rivulets fed from the copious fountains of Giraldus, the venal court historian of Henry II. They cannot rise higher than their source, while, as we shall see, the solitary and unmeaning passage appended to the metaphysics of John of Salisbury is so unskilful a forgery that it runs quite away from the subject of the "Bull," and like an impetuous and bewildered advocate overturns its own case.

St. Bernard's evidence regarding Ireland embraces two distinct and very different periods. In the first place he describes the state of things previous to St. Malachy, and secondly, he gives an account of the Church in that country during the episcopate of his friend, when his own sons, the Cistercians, were actively co-operating in St. Malachy's work. Strange to say, it is St. Bernard's second-hand testimony about antiquated abuses before his own time which has caught the eye of Dr. Lingard and many other writers, while his evidence regarding the contemporary glories of the Irish Church has been almost ignored. It would be interesting to know when the idea of writing the life of St. Malachy suggested itself to St. Bernard. He was older than his friend, and it can hardly be supposed that he anticipated that he was to act as his biographer. When St. Malachy visited Clairvaux, on his way to Rome, in the Pontificate

of Innocent II. (1130 to 1143), his work of reform was already completed. He had resigned the Primacy, and in the words of St. Bernard : " Seeing that peace reigned everywhere, he began to look for peace for himself." The object of his journey was to obtain Palliums for the Archbishops of Ireland, as the Apostolic confirmation of this work. He came, therefore, to ask for favours, not to revert to old grievances which would have been impolitic, as well as uncharitable, at such a time. We may, therefore, conclude that St. Bernard's information regarding Irish history was chiefly derived from his own subjects whom St. Malachy had introduced into Ireland, and it is not unlikely that they were betrayed into some of those rhetorical exaggerations by which the honour of the flock is so often sacrificed to the glory of the missionary. But, granting the truth of all that is said by St. Bernard, the evils existing in Ireland before St. Malachy's time are very far from presenting that universal character which is attributed to them by Dr. Lingard. If St. Bernard says that " everywhere, in place of Christian meekness, fierce barbarism had crept in " (cap. x.) on the other hand he supplies facts which oblige us to qualify the statement. He describes (cap. iv.) the sanctity and miracles, and the wide-spread influence of Malchus, Bishop of Lismore. Armagh, which had been the chief seat of the evils deplored

by St. Bernard, was ruled by St. Celsus, whose name is found in the Roman Martyrology, and St. Bernard bears testimony to his sanctity.¹ It is also evident from the narrative that whatever may have been the abuses introduced by the civil power at Armagh, they did not prevail in other dioceses. St. Malachy was only thirty years of age when he was appointed to the Bishopric of Connor by St. Celsus, who had recognised his extraordinary gifts, and eight years later the Archbishop nominated him as his successor in the Primacy. St. Malachy obstinately refused to accept the dignity, whereupon Gilbert, Bishop of Limerick, Legate of the Holy See, and Malchus, Bishop of Lismore, assembled a Council of the bishops and princes of the country, and compelled the Saint to submit under pain of anathema.² Thus in Munster we find, in the first place, Church and State working harmoniously together; and secondly, we have evidence at this

¹ "Vir bonus et timoratus." "In Ireland, St. Celsus, Bishop; the predecessor of the Blessed Malachy in the Episcopate." (*Roman Martyrology*, Ap. 6.) In the *Annals of Ulster* (anno 1124) we find the following obituary of this saintly prelate: "Celsus, the Vicar of Patrick, a man of unspotted chastity, an Archbishop of Western Europe, and the head (or ruler) to whose authority the Irish and foreigners whether lay or clerical were subjects, having consecrated bishops, &c. . . . and made laws for the regulation of morals, and the preservation of peace, . . . gave up his soul to the angels and archangels in the Monastery of Ard-Patric, in Munster."

² Convocatis episcopis et principibus terrae . . . intentantibus anathema. *S. Bernard. Vita S. Malachiae*, cap. x.)

period of the active administration of the Legate of the Holy See in Ireland. Apostolic authority alone could compel a bishop to leave his own diocese ; for as St. Malachy himself objected, according to the laws of the Church “ he was united to another spouse whom it was not lawful to put away.”

Two Saints, canonised by the supreme authority of Rome, occupied the See of Armagh during the greater part of the first half of the twelfth century, and Malchus of Lismore seems to have been little inferior to them in sanctity, and the fact that all these powerful and heroic bishops died in peace speaks well for the civil power in those wild times. The See of Armagh was then invested with extraordinary temporal as well as spiritual authority. The Archbishop of Armagh, says St. Bernard, “ gave his orders with the authority of St. Patrick,” and such was the reverence and honour in which he was held, that the kings and the rulers of the country as well as the bishops and the clergy were subject to him.¹ It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the civil power should seek to usurp the power of this See, an abuse not uncommon even in countries nearer to the centre of authority. A hundred years later St. Dominic found nearly all the benefices of churches in Lombardy and other

¹ Non modo episcopi, et sacerdotes, sed etiam regum ac principum universitas. (*S. Bernard. Vita S. Malachiae*, cap. x.)

parts of Italy in the hands of laymen, who passed them on to their children like any other inheritance.¹

St. Malachy's reception by Innocent II. is in itself enough to prove that at that time the Pope had no complaints to make of the state of religion in Ireland. The Saint spent a month in Rome, during which time "The Sovereign Pontiff," says St. Bernard, "on many occasions, and with great care, made inquiries concerning the state of the Church in his country, and the manners of his people, and this as well from his attendants as himself . . . and when he was preparing to depart he authorised him to act for him, appointing him Legate throughout the whole of Ireland. . . . 'With regard to the Palliums,' said the Pope, 'the business must be transacted with greater solemnity;'" and he ordered St. Malachy on his return to convoke a National Council to deliberate on the subject. It appears that there was a difference of opinion as to the number of Archbishops who were to be invested. St. Malachy asked only for two Palliums; but some years later, in 1152, Eugenius III. sent Cardinal Paparo with four Palliums to the Archbishops of Armagh, Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam.²

¹ *Vita di S. Caterina da Siena.* (B. Raimondo, v. i. ch. 8.)

² MacGeoghegan, p. 235.

The Pope granted St. Malachy's request regarding the confirmation of a new Metropolitan, and "taking the Mitre from his own head he placed it on that of Malachy, giving him also the Stole and Maniple which he used in offering the Holy Sacrifice."¹ Thus in the year 1152, that is, only three years before the period of her supposed ecclesiastical anarchy, in the Pontificate of the Cistercian Pope Eugenius III., we find the Irish Church in peaceful relations with Rome, beloved and honoured in her representatives, and bound up more closely than that of any other country in the world with the Cistercians, the dominant Religious Order of the age. At the time when St. Bernard wrote, he tells us that Mellifont "had conceived and brought forth five daughters, and thus the seed multiplying day by day, the number of monks increased according to the desire and the prophecy of Malachy." Besides the five houses of the Order, there were also two Cistercian Bishops in Ireland in St. Bernard's time.² Anastasius IV. followed Eugenius, and after a reign of one year was succeeded, A.D. 1154, by Adrian IV. I cannot find any evidence of the personal interference of Adrian in the affairs of Ire-

¹ *S. Bernard. Vita S. Malachiae*, cap. xvi.

² *Histoire de St. Bernard*, Ratisbone, t. i. p. 493. "Episcopus ex Clara-valle assumptus. In Hibernia duo Episcopi re et nomine christiani." (*Menologium Cisterciense*, Nov. 3.)

land during the five years of his Pontificate.¹ From all that we have learned of this Pontiff's character, this abstention is very difficult to explain, if the Church in Ireland had suddenly fallen into the disorganised condition which the "Bull" supposes. It cannot be said that he was ignorant of the state of things, or that his authority was set at naught in Ireland; for in the third year of his reign the *Four Masters* tell us of a Council held at the great Cistercian Abbey of Mellifont, at which were present "The Legate and the successor of Patrick," with seventeen bishops; on which occasion the king of Meath was excommunicated and banished.² We must, therefore, either conclude that, having given over the Irish Church to the enlightened care of Henry Plantagenet in 1155, the Pope thought he had done enough, and withdrew from the scene during the whole of his Pontificate; or else that St. Malachy, and the Cistercians, and the mission of Cardinal Paparo in 1152, had so firmly established ecclesiastical discipline, that Rome saw no necessity

¹ In a notice of an article on the subject in a German periodical (*Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*), the writer remarks: "In the pages of the *Stimmen* a clear, impartial sketch is given . . . but the writer has failed to find any allusion to a Papal 'Bull' in sanction of it (the alleged gift of Ireland), either in the biographies of Adrian IV., or in the Roman Archives. The assertion appears to rest upon the authority of a few English chroniclers of the period." (*The Month*, Dec., 1889, p. 598.)

² *Four Masters*, anno 1157.

for any further interference : the reader will judge which explanation is most probable.

If Popes were as irresponsible and inconsistent as other monarchs, we might narrow this discussion to the Pontificate of Adrian IV. No one pretends that the decrees of one king are any evidence as regards the mind of his predecessor, or that their consciences must of necessity run in the same groove. Alone amongst the rulers of men the Sovereign Pontiff is expected to adhere to the principles of his predecessors. It is the tribute paid by all generations to the supreme earthly representative of the justice of God ; but it unfortunately often leads to grave misapprehensions. Principles are unchanging, but their application must vary with the ever-fluctuating necessities of the age, and Popes must be at liberty, like other rulers, to govern according to circumstances.

If, therefore, it appears that, in course of time, the Roman Pontiffs used their influence in support of the Normans in those provinces of Ireland which they had subjugated, from this no valid argument can be brought to bear on the acts of Pope Adrian. As well might we say that the great St. Laurence O'Toole never preached resistance to the Normans, because, in the end, he became the chief agent in the work of pacifying the few provinces which they had colonised. "St.

Laurence, Prince Archbishop of Leinster, and Legate of the Holy See," as he is styled by the *Four Masters*, was at once the chief representative of Irish interests and the impersonation of the spirit of the Holy See during the first years of the Norman settlement. Like his contemporary and patron, St. Thomas of Canterbury, for whom he had a tender devotion, his life gives us a deeper insight into the history of the times than can be obtained by the perusal of many tomes of doubtful documents. He preached resistance as long as there was hope; but, in 1175, we find him at Windsor, in the company of the Archbishop of Tuam, as ambassador from Roderick, king of Ireland.¹ On this occasion it was agreed that Roderick should acknowledge Henry as Suzerain (*Ard Righ*), a very barren title of honour which Henry himself was obliged to give to the king of France, although a much more powerful sovereign than his titular lord.² Until his death, in 1181, St. Laurence was pursued by the unrelenting hostility of the Norman king. At the same time, he was the

¹ *Hist. Ireland.* MacGeoghegan, p. 259.

² In 1252, some eighty years later, at the meeting of Henry III. of England and St. Louis at Paris, when the French king would have given precedence to Henry as his guest, the English king refused, saying: "No, great king, this honour is yours; you are my Lord, and such you will be on all occasions." (Giry, *Vie des Saints*, 23 Aout.)

favoured and confidential minister of Pope Alexander III., the successor of Adrian IV. In 1179 he assisted at the Third Lateran Council, over which this Pontiff presided, where, as Surius tells us, "By his wisdom and example he was the light and model of the Bishops present in this venerable assembly"; and he returned to Ireland invested with legatine powers over the whole of Ireland.¹ Like St. Thomas, the other saintly antagonist of Henry II., St. Laurence was a vigorous political Saint: he was well known in Rome, France, and England, and he was solemnly canonised at Rome by Honorius III., only thirty-five years after his death. In his triple character of Archbishop, Legate and Canonised Saint, St. Laurence occupies a place in what Edmund Burke styles, "the interior history of Ireland," similar to that of St. Patrick and St. Malachy.

The historian, Catholic or Protestant, must be blind indeed who does not perceive that faith has been the animating principle of the national life of Christian Ireland. It turned the Scoti, the hardiest and most adventurous warriors of their day, into a nation of monks and scholars, and after a lapse of three centuries restored all their military energy in the presence of

¹ *Legatus totius Hiberniae.* Surius. Nov. 14. See also Giry under same date.

the heathen Northmen. The coming of the Normans brought them face to face with Cæsarism, in the person of Henry Plantagenet, its most powerful and unscrupulous living representative. Humanly speaking, the struggle of Ireland was hopeless. In the contest with the Northmen fully five-sixths of the native population had been swept away,¹ and strangers and enemies were planted in many of her provinces. Again, the Church of St. Patrick seemed in danger from without, and again she came forth from the conflict unsubdued and unfettered by those royal bonds which, centuries later, strangled the faith of England. In this emergency God gave Ireland a Saint, His best earthly gift, as He had given St. Thomas to England.

It is not necessary to suppose that St. Laurence had definite and detailed instructions from Rome as to the course he should pursue. The Church is a living body in which the members act in concert with the head ; and the ease, and freedom, and perfection of her active union, in any particular country, is in proportion to the sanctity of her members. The Normans had got into Ireland, and neither the Pope nor St. Laurence imagined that they were such dutiful sons of the Church that she could induce

¹ See O'Curry's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, vol. i. pp. 17 and 96 ; and Sir C. G. Duffy's *Bird's Eye View of Irish History*, p. 14.

them to retire, so there was nothing for it but to make the best of circumstances, and to this work St. Laurence betook himself vigorously as the representative, at one and the same time, of Rome, and of the best interests of his native land.

St. Laurence was more successful than St. Thomas of Canterbury, and the obvious explanation is found in that union in matters of discipline which distinguished the Irish clergy. This was the reward and the crown of that purity of life to which even Giraldus Cambrensis pays homage. Wheresoever the clergy of any country are corrupt, they are also subservient to the civil power. Either designedly, or under the influence of that spirit which shapes the deeds of evil men, one of the assaults of the sacrilegious king was on the morals of the Irish Church; and if he was foiled by St. Laurence, it was because the Saint fell back on that fortress of God at Rome, against whose gates no earthly power has ever prevailed. One fact given by Baronius,¹ from Surius, will give some idea of the extent, and insidious character of this conflict. St. Laurence in ancient Irish records is styled "The Archbishop of the foreigners," owing to the great number of Danes in his Province of Leinster; and the Normans on their arrival fraternised with their Northern kindred. In the train of the Normans

¹ *Annales*, anno 1179.

came many ecclesiastics from England ; whereupon abuses appeared in Ireland with which the Irish Ecclesiastical Courts were not accustomed to deal. On one occasion the Legate, St. Laurence, despatched as many as a hundred and forty priests to Rome, to be absolved from the guilt of concubinage, a crime, which, with all his diseased ingenuity, Giraldus Cambrensis could not discover amongst the Irish clergy. Baronius probably saw in this nothing more than a proof of St. Laurence's reverence for the Holy See, as he was himself invested with all the authority which was required in dealing with these enormities. Even those who have gone no deeper than the pages of Giraldus in their study of the morals of the Irish clergy, will be inclined to take another view of the matter : it is plain that there was a sacred and judicial irony in the act of the Legate, which was intended to put a check upon the importation, as well as the licence, of the ecclesiastical camp-followers of the Norman king.

It may be well now to put a question which appears to have been strangely overlooked in the present controversy. The ancient Annals of Ireland are more than usually diffuse on the subject of the Norman incursion. It is from them that we must gather our information as to the prevalent impression regarding this event which existed in the minds

of the persons most interested in the matter ; moreover, they were the work of ecclesiastics. Did these writers see anything in the Norman inroad which, to their eyes, gave it even a semblance of being a crusade or religious war ? I think I am safe in saying that a single line cannot be produced from the Ancient Annals of Ireland which even suggest such an idea, or even makes any allusion to the “ Bull.”

The Annals of Inisfallen were written in the lifetime of those who had witnessed the coming of the Normans ; but the only important entries which bear on the subjects run as follows :—

“ A.D. 1171. The son of the Empress (Henry II.) came to Ireland, and made a settlement at Waterford.

“ „ 1194. Thadeus, son of Mathgamni O’Brien, was killed by the foreigners at Cashel, although under the protection of the Legate and Patrick.”¹

It is from the *Annals of the Four Masters* that we get a correct idea of the character of the Norman incursion as it appeared to the people of Ireland at the time. This “last and greatest monument of the

¹ At this date the term “foreigner” had been transferred from Danes to Normans. For “Patrick,” read “Archbishop of Armagh.”

learning of the Gaedhils," says Mr. O'Curry, "will ever be looked upon as of the most certain and unimpeachable authority."¹ The devoted band of Franciscan scholars who composed these Annals had advantages in the study of the ancient history of Ireland which no longer exist. They wrote, or, to speak more accurately, made their compilation, before Cromwell and William of Orange, and thus they were able to take up the unbroken traditions of that mixed state of society which had arisen in Ireland by the amalgamation of the Scottish, or Milesian race, with the Norman colonists. They recognised all the evils which followed in the train of the stranger; but at the same time they were too profound and dispassionate scholars not to acknowledge the share which some of the Irish themselves had in these calamities. In fact, from the following extracts we see that it is Dermott, king of Leinster, the adulterer and traitor, whom they brand as the chief criminal:—

"A.D. 1167. Dermott M'Murrough returned from England with a force of Galls.²

" „ 1169. The fleet of the Flenings came from England in the army of M'Murrough.

¹ See *MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History*, pp. 75, 93, 150, 159.

² One of the Irish names for the Norsemen and other foreigners.

“ A.D. 1170. Robert FitzStephen, and Richard, son of Gilbert, *i.e.*, Earl Strongbow, came from England into Ireland with a numerous force and many knights and archers, in the army of M'Murrough, to contest Leinster for him, and to disturb the Irish of Ireland in general; and M'Murrough gave his daughter (in marriage) to the Earl Strongbow for coming into his army.

“ „ 1171. Dermott M'Murrough, king of Leinster, by whom a trembling sod was made of all Ireland—after having brought over the Saxons, after having done extensive injuries to the Irish, after plundering and burning many churches (as Cean-aunus, Clonard, &c.)—died before the end of a year [after this plundering] of an insufferable and unknown disease; for he became putrid while living, through the miracles of God, Colum-Cille, and Finan, and the other Saints of Ireland, whose churches he had profaned and burned some time before; and he died at Fearnamor without (making) a will, without penance, without the Body of Christ, without unction, as his evil deeds deserved.

“The king of England, the second Henry, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Earl of Andegavia, and lord of many other countries, came to Ireland this year. Two hundred and forty was the number of his ships, and he put in at Port Lairge.”

From this year until the death of Hugo de Lacy in 1186, the history of the Norman invasion, as recorded by Irish writers from whom the Four Masters compiled their Annals, may be summed up in one sentence—they built castles and burnt churches.

“A.D. 1176. The English earl (Richard de Clare, surnamed Strongbow) died in Dublin of an ulcer, which had broken out in his foot, through the miracles of SS. Bridgid and Colum-Cille, and of all the other Saints whose churches had been destroyed by him. He saw, as he thought, St. Bridgid in the act of killing him.”

O'Donovan appends a note in which Strongbow is designated as the greatest destroyer of the clergy and laity that came to Ireland since the days of Turgesius, the Danish invader in the ninth century, already mentioned.¹

¹ Fr. Colgan. Quoted by O'Donovan.

A.D. 1186. In this year they record the death of "Hugo de Lacy, the profaner and destroyer of many churches," whose head was taken off by the blow of an axe; and they add, "this was in revenge of Colum-Cille."

It is plain, therefore, that it never occurred to the ancient ecclesiastical historians of Ireland that anything like a religious sanction had been given to the Norman inroad. The pith and marrow of these writers is found in the *Four Masters*, and from the above extracts it is evident that they considered that the national interests were identified with those of God and the Church. The rights of the Normans, like those of the Danes, were merely those of the strongest. Ireland at the time was split up into small principalities or clans. She was far inferior to the Normans in the art of war, and hence her soldiers were at first unable to resist that terrible chivalry, and those mailed archers (*Sagittarii loricati*) before whom, at Crecy and Poitiers, the best knights of France went down in the proportion of nearly ten to one.

There is, however, something to be said in favour of what is called the "disunion of ancient Ireland." It is not at all clear that it was an evil in the event. Her political organisation in the twelfth century very much resembled that of Spain in the eighth, at the time of the Moorish invasion.

Both countries were one nation with separate centres of resistance, and it is probably to this that they owed the preservation of their national existence ; and that this state of things was providentially ordered for the defence and security of their religion. England had one head in the days of Harold, and Henry Tudor : the death of one, and the apostacy of the other were equally fatal. Moreover, the history of the world reveals that while great empires are instruments of conquest and destruction, it is in countries which have many centres of government and intellectual activity that great men are multiplied. Ireland was hardly more divided than ancient Greece, or mediæval Italy, and the Saints and Doctors who went forth from her for so many centuries owed much of their originality and individual energy to the absence of centralisation.

We have taken a glance at the state of cruel and degrading servitude to which the Normans reduced the people of England. On the other hand, from the very outset of the struggle in Ireland, we find that the Norman knight offered a tribute to the Irish character similar to that which the Roman invader paid to the conquered Greek. The following is the testimony of a writer who wrote with a mind untroubled by our national antipathies :—

“In the friendly intercourse the conquerors were subjugated by the spell of native gentleness,

and an irresistible attraction induced them to assume the manners, the language, and even the dress of the conquered. The Anglo-Normans became Irish by adoption, and were delighted to assume Irish names in place of their feudal titles of Earl and Baron. . . . Enamoured of the music and poetry of Ireland, they invited the bards to their table, while to the women of the country they entrusted the instruction of their children.”¹

In England the daughters of the native nobility were enslaved by Norman grooms and varlets :² in Ireland, on the other hand, we find Eva, Princess of Leinster, married to the Earl of Pembroke (Strongbow) even before the arrival of Henry II. ; De Burgo, his immediate successor in the vice-royalty, married Una, the daughter of O'Connor, king of Connaught ; while the famous race of the Geraldines sprang from the union of Maurice Fitzgerald with the grand-daughter of an Irish king.³

In all history, and eminently in that of Christian nations, there is a silent undercurrent which too often escapes the observation of those whose curio-

¹ Augustin Thierry, *Conquête d'Angleterre par les Normands*, iv. 240.

² *Nobiles puellæ despicabilium ludibrio armigerorum patebant, et ab immundis nebulonibus oppressæ dedecus suum deplorabant.* (Oderic, *Vitalis*, p. ii. lib. iv.)

³ *Four Masters*. “Irish Pedigrees,” O'Hart, p. 417. *The Earls of Kildare*, by the Marquis of Kildare, p. 10.

sity is only awakened by storms. It is the women of a country who make its men : "The Spartan women alone command the men," said a stranger to the wife of Leonidas. "The Spartan women alone bring forth men," was her proud rejoinder. The Christian mother does more : she it is who perpetuates in a people that moral law, adherence to which is like a promise of national immortality. Even in Pagan times the position of women in Erin was singularly exalted, as is plain from the names of the many royal heroines who appear in the pages of her bards and her annalists. It is also evident from many passages in the writings of St. Patrick, that he found the women of Ireland in a state of independence, and social dignity very uncommon among Pagan nations. The barbarian tide from the north appears to have made no essential change in their condition. The legend of the lady—

"Whose maiden smile in safety lighted her round the green isle,"

dates from the reign of Brian (1014). Again, in 1167, on the eve of the Norman incursion, the *Four Masters* tell us that after the great national and ecclesiastical assembly held at Meath in that year, "Women used to traverse Ireland alone."¹ There are many elements in that very indefinite compound called civilisation : amongst them loyalty

¹ O'Donovan's Trans., A.D. 1167.

to the weaker sex is certainly not the least important, and in this respect Ireland in the twelfth century presented a very favourable contrast to England under the Normans.¹

III.

“History may in the perversion serve for a magazine furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in Church and State, and supplying the means of keeping alive, or reviving dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury.”—*Edmund Burke*.

THE arguments in the preceding sections of this essay have been somewhat of a discursive character. The course adopted by the advocates of the authenticity of the “Bull” of Adrian IV. has rendered it necessary to pursue this line. From their style it is plain that they have judged their case to be one in which no part of the evidence was strong enough to stand by itself, and in the fierce ardour of controversy they have accepted the support of unworthy literary auxiliaries who day by day are becoming more and more objects of contempt and disgust to all honest historical writers.

We shall now approach “The spurious Bull of the much maligned Pontiff Adrian IV.,” as it is

¹ “There was no security for females unless they took refuge in a convent.” (Lingard, ii. p. 6, n.) . . . “The Princess Matilda, afterwards Queen of Henry I., was obliged to retire for safety to a royal convent at Wilton.” (*Hist. Eng.*, A. T. Drane, p. 93.)

designated by His Eminence Cardinal Moran,¹ albeit it stands in the Roman Bullarium. It may be well to premise that the Bullarium is nothing more than a collection of documents, gathered, in many instances, from very doubtful sources, and put together by a private hand. No attempt was made to collect the Bulls of the Roman Pontiffs until the year 1550, and the first edition included only seventy of these documents. The subsequent investigations of Cardinal Caraffa, Labbe, Martene, Mabillon, &c., enabled Cocquelines to produce, in 1739, the immense collection which bears his name, extracted, as he tells us, from "burial places" in various libraries, and obtained sometimes even from heretical sources; and he takes care to inform us that his work is a private one, and unsupported by any public authority. The "Bull" of Adrian IV. he gives on the authority of the English writers Mathew Paris and Giraldus Cambrensis.² From the pages of these very questionable reporters it has found its way into the Bullarium. Unfortunately it is there, and this in itself is a serious matter. The advantages are on the side of its supporters. A violent eviction is impossible. All that we can

¹ *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, November, 1872.

² *Bullarium Amplissima Collectio*, vol. i.; Pref. pp. 4, 9; vol. ii. p. 351. Romæ, 1739. On the subject of supposed Papal documents, see Father Ryder, "False Decretals" (*Catholic Controversy* p. 177).

do is to scrutinise its features, and demand proof of its legitimacy, and of its right to occupy a place in the Bullarium of the Roman Pontiffs. We have seen that the alleged motives for its appearance did not exist ; our next step is to show that the " Bull " is destitute of all necessary formalities and vouchers, and that its style and spirit are in glaring contradiction to all the authentic " Bulls " of Adrian IV., and, as far as the present writer can make out, to every enactment, which, in the course of ages, has emanated from the Roman Pontiffs, in dealing with the Bishops, and organised hierarchies of the Catholic Church. The use of italics will, perhaps, help the reader to appreciate the salient points :—

" ADRIAN, Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God, to our most dear Son in Christ, the illustrious King of the English, greeting and Apostolic benediction : Your highness, with no slight profit and praise, has fixed your mind on the extension of a glorious name on earth, and the attainment of an eternal reward in heaven, when, in the spirit of a Catholic prince, *you set yourself to widen the boundaries of the Church, to announce the truth of Christian faith to ignorant and uncultivated nations, and to root out the weeds of vice from the field of the Lord ;* while, in order the more fittingly to carry out your purpose, you ask for counsel and

favour from the Apostolic See. In which undertaking we are confident that the blessed results will be, with God's assistance, *in proportion to the exalted character of your designs and the discretion with which you pursue them*, since works which are *inspired by an ardent faith and love of religion* are always certain to have a holy end and fulfilment. Truly, and without doubt, as your Majesty acknowledges, does Ireland, and all the other islands on which Christ the Sun of Justice has shone, and which have received the traditions of the Christian faith, belong to St. Peter and the Most Holy Roman Church. Wherefore do we plant in them a faithful seed dear to God, with a willingness proportionate to the strict account which we foresee we shall be compelled to render of them. Most beloved son in Christ, inasmuch as you have informed us of your desire to enter the island of Ireland with the intention of bringing that people under the control of the laws, and of extirpating the weeds of vice; purposing also to pay the annual tribute to St. Peter of one penny on each house, and to preserve the rights of the churches of that land whole and inviolate,—we, therefore, sympathising in your pious and praiseworthy desire, with befitting good will, and with gracious assent to your request, will take it as a pleasing and acceptable service, that, for the pur-

pose of *extending the boundaries of the Church, restraining the torrent of vice, and diffusing the Christian religion*, you should enter that island, and *put into effect those things which concern the glory of God and the salvation of that country*; and that the people of that land should receive you with honour and venerate you as lord, the rights of churches remaining without doubt untouched and entire, with reservation of the annual tribute of one penny to St. Peter and the Most Holy Roman Church. If, therefore, you determine to carry out those designs which you have contemplated, *set your mind to the work of infusing good morals into that people, and take such steps as well in your own capacity as by those whose faith, doctrine, and life, in your judgment, shall qualify them for the work*, so that in that country the Church may be adorned, and the Christian faith and religion *planted* and increased; and see that all that tends to the glory of God and the salvation of souls be ordained by you, that you may deserve from God an increase of eternal reward, and on earth obtain a glorious name throughout all time."

Whensoever the authenticity of any document is questioned, if at the same time undoubted writings of the same author exist, it is obvious that comparison is an essential element in the discussion.

In the Roman Bullarium we find twenty-one "Bulls" of Adrian IV. They are all concerned with questions of ecclesiastical privileges. Five bear the seal or *Bulla* of the Pope: eighteen are signed by the Pontiff himself; but all, without exception, give the name of the Chancellor of the Roman Church by whom they were delivered. Amongst these the editor of the Bullarium of 1739, on the authority, as he tells us, of Giraldus Cambrensis and Mathew Paris, introduces a letter from the Pope to *some English king*, no name of said king being given. The letter bears upon it neither seal, date, nor evidence of delivery: it is addressed to no one, signed by no one: it has neither beginning nor end, neither head nor tail.

It cannot be said that the absence of signature, &c., is, by itself, sufficient to invalidate the document; but it is very remarkable in the present instance, as the "Bulls" of Adrian IV. are distinguished by their singularly rigid legal formality.

In the *Patrologia* of Migne (vol. clxxxviii.) we find two hundred and forty-seven documents which are attributed to Adrian IV. Amongst them there are ten which are unsigned and informal. Of these, some are fragments, and all are papers of transitory importance, the original form of which it was no one's interest to preserve: whereas the "Bull" was Henry's only title-deed to a kingdom.

At the same time, in each and every one, with the exception of the "Bull," we find an intelligible, legal statement of the case, with the proper names and addresses of the persons concerned. The libraries and archives of Italy, France, Germany, Spain, England, Scotland, Poland and Greece, in fact of every Christian country except Ireland, have delivered up their evidence to the active and powerful administration of Adrian IV., and each document, whether complete or mutilated, bears the stamp of that jealous defence of the established rights of churches which is seen in so marked a manner in all the writings of this Pontiff.

The following extracts will give the reader some idea of the spirit which animated the enactments of Adrian IV. To his "Venerable Brother Raynerius, Bishop of Siena," he writes :—

"Whereas the charge of Sovereign Pontiff, laid upon us by God, makes it our duty to cherish all Christians, and be ever ready to give ear to their prayers: in a special manner are we bound, with paternal solicitude, to act with foresight in dealing with our brothers in the Episcopate, and in the exercise of that office to embrace them with a still greater effusion of charity," &c., &c.

(Signature) "EGO, ADRIANUS,

"Cathol. Eccl. Episc.

“Dat. apud Civitatem Castellanam per manum Rolandi S.R.E. Presb. Card. et Cancellarii, xii. Kalen. Augusti Indictione iii. Incarnationis Domini anno MCLV. Pontif. vero Domini Adriani Papae IV. anno I.”

To Henry, Patriarch of Grado :—

“We are witnesses at once to the dignity of the Apostolic office entrusted to us, and to the useful exercise of our trust, when with watchful care we guard the privileges of individual churches so that their rights may be preserved untouched,” &c., &c.

To a Monastery in Prussia :—

“The care of the Universal Church has been entrusted to us by God, the Provider of all that is good, that we may show our love for those who are dedicated to God, and that by every means in our power we may propagate those Religious Orders which are pleasing to Him. . . . It is the duty, therefore, of all who love the Christian faith to be devout to the Religious Orders, and watchfully to maintain holy places, together with those who are set aside for the divine service, so that they may not be disturbed by any vexations of evil men, or wearied by their insolent tyranny,” &c., &c.

No document, however, is so much to the point as Adrian’s letter to Louis VII. of France, which is

given by Mansi, as well as Migne.¹ In conjunction with his vassal, the king of England, Louis asked the Pope's permission to undertake a crusade against the infidels and apostates of Spain, for which purpose he had already collected his troops and made his preparations. The king of France was a loyal son of the Church, and Adrian did not deny that his purpose was a good and holy one. For all that he withheld his permission, and this in words which are a categorical repudiation of every sentence in the supposed missive to Henry Plantagenet.

He tells the king that his impetuosity had filled the minds of many with astonishment and anxiety (*multos attonitos et suspensos*). "To enter a foreign country," continues the Pope, "without a consultation with its rulers and people, appears to be both incautious and dangerous. As we understand the matter, you are preparing to hurry thither before you have asked advice from the Church and rulers of the country; whereas, such an attempt should on no account be made until, in the first place, its necessity has been brought under your notice by the rulers of the said country, followed by an invitation on their part . . . by these present letters we suggest that your Highness

¹ *Conciliorum Collectio*, vol. xxi. p. 818. *Patrologia*, vol. clxxxviii. p. 1695.

should inquire into and investigate the necessities of the country with the help of the rulers of that kingdom, and that you should diligently study the wishes, not only of its church and rulers, but also those of the people, and that, as is becoming, you should take their advice" (*ab eis consilium sicut decet accipias*), and the Pope goes on to say that otherwise "We ourselves, for many reasons, might appear to be capricious" (*Nos ipsi leves in hoc facto possemus multipliciter apparere*).

There is no question as to the authenticity of this document. People do not invent refusals, and moreover, it is as much in keeping with the undeviating principles of Adrian IV. as the Plantagenet "Bull" is foreign and antagonistic to them.

These extracts will suffice to reveal the spirit which animates the Bulls of Adrian IV. They confirm the evidence already drawn in the text from his life, letters, and character, and they are a striking revelation of his vigour and sagacity in the government of the Church. The more closely we study the spurious letter attributed to the Pope, the more evident it becomes that it is the composition of a layman. Any ecclesiastic, with the faintest acquaintance with the modes of procedure of the Roman administration, would have understood that, to give the document an appearance of validity, the name of some Prelate should have been introduced

as delegate or representative of the Pope. At almost every line the letter reveals the swordsman—the self-appointed military missionary. In the Pope's Bulls everything goes slowly; they bristle with the proper names of individuals and places, whose rights are all respected and adjudicated on, whereas in the supposed Commission to Henry, the judge comes, as it were, with lance in rest, as if he were charging the Moslem, without any reference to those “undiminished rights (*jura illibata*) of each and every church,” in the defence of which, as we have seen, Pope Adrian was ever inexorable. It is the laity whom he is supposed to have given to the king as ecclesiastical instruments to reform and rule the clergy. This was certainly the style of Church government which Henry tried everywhere to establish; but even the laity, in those days, were wise enough to prefer the clearly defined and limited jurisdiction of their Bishops.

Up to this point our arguments have been drawn from events which were known to the whole world. In the case of history, however stormy, this is generally a satisfactory mode of procedure: in the end it is the clouds which pass away, while truth reigns like the stars. Not so, however, with questions which have been narrowed to mere critical and documentary dimensions, especially in cases where originals cannot be produced. In entering

on this part of our subject, our best plan, therefore, will be to state the case in favour of the "Bull," in so far as it rests on the existence of the document.

The letter of the Pope is stated to have been written in 1155, immediately on his accession to the Pontificate, at the suggestion of John of Salisbury, and it is asserted that the king of England produced it before his Council at the time; but that he was dissuaded from taking any steps towards putting it in force by the counsels of his mother, the Empress Matilda. Nothing more, as far as we can learn, was heard of the "Bull" in Rome, England, or Ireland for a period of twenty years, until in 1175, eight years after the landing of the Normans in Ireland, and sixteen years after the death of Adrian, when Henry is said to have exhibited it at a Synod held at Waterford.

In spite of the suspicious concealment of the letter for the space of twenty years, the story seems to hold together until we investigate in detail the evidence for each of these statements. We find that they are all disputed by grave authorities; but the battle has to be fought on such uncertain and slippery ground that it is hard to see how it can ever be decided, unless it is kept on the higher and more philosophic level to which we have attempted to raise it. However, as it would seem like a confession of weakness to avoid this part of the

discussion, we shall select what seem to be the essential points.

The earliest writer in whose pages the "Bull" is to be found is Giraldus Cambrensis. It was published in his *Expugnatio Hybernica*, which was written in 1189, in the reign of King John, that is, thirty-four years after the supposed composition of the document, and we are justified in assuming that it flowed from his work into the pages of Ralph de Diceto, and other English court historians of the period. I am far from supposing that there was intentional dishonesty on the part of any of these writers. It is not likely that they had the opportunity, even supposing they had the inclination, to investigate the authenticity of the document. They might naturally expect the inquiry to originate in Ireland itself, and part of Henry's dexterous management of his fraud was to keep his forgery to himself, in the first instance, and then cautiously to unveil it, and this mode of procedure was obviously the best policy on the part of a diplomatist who was at once one of the most powerful monarchs, and accomplished deceivers of his age. Henry pushed on his armies into Ireland, at first by his agents, and then in person, with now and then some vague and obscure hints that long ago a departed Pope had blessed his mission; and, if this arch-conspirator deceived

simple and honest men, there is nothing in this to be wondered at, although the heart sinks at contemplating the success which has attended his detestable sagacity.

Before we pursue the case against this royal forger, we must meet the only argument for the authenticity of the " Bull," which is really deserving of serious attention.

I refer to the passage allusive to the subject which is found in the *Metalogicus* of John of Salisbury. This writer was an honest man, and a zealous ecclesiastic: we want no better proof of this than the passage already quoted from his Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury, in which he bears testimony to the bad character of Henry II. At the very period when, as he tells us, such grave suspicions were entertained of the evil dispositions of the young English king, and his depraved councillors, John had an audience with Adrian IV. at Beneventum, Rome being at the time in the hands of the adherents of Arnold of Brescia. In his writings two accounts are found of his relations with the Pope on that occasion, one in the *Polycraticus*, the other in the *Metalogicus*. The passage in the *Poly-craticus* is too long to be quoted here. It gives minutely the Pope's own words, and the remarks of his visitor, and fits in admirably with the characters of both. Adrian listens with great patience

and good humour to a long lecture from John of Salisbury on the reforms required in his court, at the termination of which, John tells us, with genuine humility and simplicity, that the Pope laughed at him.¹ In this account no allusion is made either to the king of England or to Ireland. On the other hand, the *Metalogicus* runs thus :—

“Although he (the Pope) had a mother and brother living, his affection for me was more tender. He declared in public and private that he loved me more than any living being. He had conceived such an affection for me that, whenever he had the opportunity, he consoled himself by pouring forth the secrets of his conscience before me.” He then goes on to say that, “At my entreaties he conceded and granted Ireland to the great Henry II.,² king of England, to be held by hereditary

¹ Lib. vi. cap. xxiii.

² When re-publishing this Essay, it occurred to me to look through the immense collection of the Letters of John of Salisbury. Migne has collected as many as 339, written either *in propria persona*, or as secretary of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. I said to myself, if he was so full of his service done to “the great Henry” that he could not keep the subject out of a treatise on Aristotle and logic, surely he will mention it to the persons concerned, and to his intimate friends. But what is the fact? The collection embraces 27 letters to Pope Adrian, 11 to Henry II., and 23 to Pope Alexander III., extending over a period of twenty-five years, from 1155 (the year of the supposed “Bull”) to 1180. Moreover, we learn from a letter to his intimate friend, Peter Abbot of Celes, in 1159, that John of Salisbury, at that date, was the special object of the hatred of the king of

succession, as his letter testifies to the present day.”¹

No question, as far as I know, has ever been raised as to the authenticity of the passage in the *Polycraticus*. It is found in the body of the work, and its language is such as might be expected from a friend of Pope Adrian, and of St. Thomas of Canterbury. On the other hand, that in the *Metalogicus* occurs at the end of the work in the place best suited for interpolation, and all authorities against the “Bull,” from Cambrensis Eversus to Cardinal Moran, have set the passage down as a forgery. There have been ambitious and unscrupulous Catholic ecclesiastical statesmen, who, for the sake of a royal master, have sacrificed the liberties of the Church; but it is hard to attribute such a disposition to John of Salisbury, and still harder to imagine that Pope Adrian would have listened to such suggestions. In the *Polycraticus* we find that John outstrips the zeal of the great Pontiff

England. “Alone in the kingdom,” he writes, “I am accused of abridging the royal power,” but not a line is to be found regarding his own services in the matter of Ireland. Indeed, I find *Hibernia* only mentioned once (L. cxviii. to Alexander III.), conveying the complaints of the Bishop of Bangor against clerics who escaped from his censures into Wales, England, Ireland, and Scotland. If the “Bull” for the reformation of the Irish Church was then, as is supposed, in the English king’s hands, it is incredible that no allusion should be made to it in a letter on so kindred a subject.

¹ Lib. iv. cap. xlii.

himself for the honour of the Roman Church, and tells the Pope that "many complained that the Roman Church, the Mother of all Churches, showed herself to others rather as a stepmother than a mother," while in the *Metalogicus* he is made to glory in the fact that he had induced the Pope to hand over the time-honoured Church of St. Patrick to an impure and unscrupulous tyrant. If we accept the "Bull," it means all this, and, if in existence, he must have been acquainted with its contents. While, on the other hand, if we suppose that allusion was made to some grant of a mere temporal and political character, with, as it is said, an "hereditary succession," then the "Bull" and the *Metalogicus* part company, which is all that our present argument requires. In the *Polycraticus* we see John of Salisbury in his natural relations with the Pope, speaking with all the freedom of an old friend, and a pious, if not over-prudent adviser, while the language of the *Metalogicus* betrays the clumsy hand of the court-flatterer. We observe that the writer does not pretend that Henry himself asked for Ireland, but merely that the Pope sent a nation as a present to the king, as if it were a mere compliment to the messenger: "at my entreaties" (*ad preces meas*). Such an idea could only have occurred to some creature of a despot's court, who realised no principle of justice outside

his master's mind. Again, the expression "to be possessed by right of inheritance" (*jure hereditario possidendum*) is either a blundering comment on the "Bull," by some one who did not stop to consider the meaning of the text, or else it is a bold attempt to push on the business from spirituals to temporals; which was a favourite policy of Henry Plantagenet. We can conceive the hurried hand of the forger, pressed for space, introducing the word "hereditary," without any allusion to ancestors or heirs, but it is incredible that such a sentence could have been penned by a learned and cautious ecclesiastical lawyer like John of Salisbury. The reader will remember the letter of St. Thomas of Canterbury to Alexander III., in which he reminds the Pope that, from the day of Henry's accession to the throne, he had assumed that dominion over the Church of England¹ "was his own by hereditary right," and in the passage in the *Metalogicus* we find him pressing on with the same fixed idea in the case of Ireland.

It is worth while to ask whether the king himself was the writer of this second forgery in support of the first. The omission of his own name in the "Bull" was a very natural slip in the case of one who was corresponding with himself, and is a remarkable specimen of intrinsic evidence of the

¹*Epist.* xix.

forgery. Moreover, in the passage in the *Metalogicus* we find the impress of the king's style. This is manifest from a comparison of the language of the passage with that of Henry's declaration at Avranches in 1172 before the Cardinals Vivian and Gratian, when he sought to clear himself of the guilt of the murder of St. Thomas. The declaration runs thus : " I, King Henry, swear upon the sacred Gospels that I have neither premeditated, known, nor ordered the murder of the holy Thomas, and that when I learned that the crime had been perpetrated, it caused me more anguish than if I heard of the murder of my own son," &c.¹ In both these documents we remark that exuberance of profession which is so often the snare as well as the evidence of habitual and exhausted duplicity.

It will perhaps be objected that all history may be upset if critics and controversialists are allowed to evade the difficulties by the supposition of forgery. To this it may be answered that history, like all other testimony, will stand or fall according to the character of the witness. An accusation of knavery in the case of Charlemagne or St. Louis would have as many valid opposing prepossessions as are found in favour of a similar charge against Henry Plantagenet. Henry II., from boyhood until his awful

¹ Baronius, *Annales*, 1172.

and ominous departure from this world,¹ was an outlaw from the commonwealth of honest men: no one can doubt that he was capable of forgery, and this even in sacred matters, if it suited his convenience, which was certainly the case as regarded his designs on Ireland. That the fabrication of Papal documents, so common in those days, was systematically practised by the Normans in Ireland, is evident from the matrix for forging the Papal seal, as appended to the "Bulls" of the Sovereign Pontiff, one of the relics of the Norman invaders, which is preserved in the Royal Irish Academy.²

We must guard against weakening our case by appearing to attempt too much. It cannot be denied that the supposed letter of Adrian IV. did make a furtive appearance some eight years after the arrival of the Normans, and that the indifference with which it was treated by the Irish leaders, lay and ecclesiastical, is at first sight inexplicable, unless we bear in mind that the very crimes of Henry II., and all the attendant circumstances of his journey into Ireland, were all in favour of the quiet hatching of the imposture.

¹ J. R. Green, *Hist. of the English*, vol. i. p. 181. His account differs from that of Dr. Lingard, who attributes the dying king's malignant dispositions to fever; but the statements of Mr. Green are more in accordance with the facts related by contemporary writers. (See Gervase, *Chron.* i. 449, and Roger de Hoveden, ii. 366.)

² Cardinal Moran, *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Nov., 1872, p. 63.

He came to Ireland red-handed from the murder of the head of the Church in England: it was well known in Ireland that he was flying from the Legates of the Pope, who had arrived in France for the express purpose of putting him on his trial, and that he had sent cruisers around the coast to prevent all communication with the Supreme Ecclesiastical Tribunal: when, therefore, it was whispered here and there by members of his train that the king of England had come as an Apostolic Missioner to reform the Irish Church, the barefaced absurdity of the claim was enough to secure it against all serious discussion. That this is no unfounded supposition is proved by the fact that Cardinal Vivian, Legate *a latere* from Alexander III., who arrived in Ireland in 1177, six years after the landing of Henry, either knew nothing about the "Bull," or else treated it as a mere *ruse de guerre*. From William of Newbury, a contemporary English historian, we learn that Cardinal Vivian took the Irish side, and exhorted the national party to fight for their fatherland.

"John de Courcy," he writes, "having collected a powerful body of knights and foot soldiers, determined to invade Ulster, that province of Ireland which is separated from Scotland by a narrow strait. It happened that Vivian, the Legate of the Holy See, a man remarkable for his eloquence, had just then arrived in these parts from Scotland. He

had been honourably received by the king (of Ulster) and the Bishops of the province, and at the time was residing in the city of Down, near the sea. When the news arrived of the approach of the enemy, the Irish consulted the Legate on the course to be pursued in this emergency; he answered that it was their duty to fight for their fatherland (*pugnandum pro patria*), and he blessed them, at the same time offering up public prayers for their success. Thus encouraged, they sallied forth impetuously; but, being easily overpowered by the mailed archers, they turned and fled. The city of Down was captured, and the Roman Legate and his followers took refuge in the church, which was very famous owing to the relics of the Saints which were preserved therein.”¹

Roger de Hoveden, who, at this time, had been for three years employed as one of the chaplains of Henry II., gives a graphic description of the king's fury when he heard of the arrival of the Legate in England, on his way to Ireland, and with a slight variation in the narrative he confirms William of Newbury's statement that the Cardinal Legate was regarded as an enemy by Henry and his party.²

¹ Gul. Newbrigensis. *Gesta Angl.* bk. iii. cap. ix.

² *Chronica*. Ed. Stubbs. *An.* 1176, 1177. Giraldus Cambrensis, with his usual ingenuity, places the invaders *inside* the walls of the city of Down, protected and supported by the Legate.

We conclude, therefore, that up to the year 1177, that is, twenty-two years after the date of the alleged Commission to Henry II., nothing was known about the document at Rome. It was still in process of incubation, and so it escaped the notice of the Papal Legate, and the contemporary annalists of the Irish Church. As we have already seen, the reigning Pontiff, Alexander III., when Cardinal Rolando, was Chancellor of the Roman Church under Adrian IV., and his signature is appended to all the "Bulls" of that Pontiff, which are preserved in the Bullarium. No one imagines that Popes know everything, but it is inconceivable that Alexander could have been ignorant on this point, supposing so important a document to exist, or that he could have omitted to give his ambassador instructions in accordance with its contents. It may be added that the policy of Cardinal Vivian is a still more destructive argument against the confirmatory letter of Alexander III. himself in 1177, which is acknowledged to be dubious even by Giraldus.

Our inquiry comes down no farther than Pope Adrian. Subsequent letters of Roman Pontiffs on the subject of Ireland stand by themselves. Many of them demand quite as rigid a scrutiny as that which we have devoted to the singular document before us, but even if they are proved to be

authentic, they must be judged by the circumstances and political exigencies of the ages which produced them; in such cases the acts of one Pontiff cannot be used as retrospective commentaries on, or proofs of, those of his predecessors.

It is one of Ireland's many misfortunes that for seven centuries her historical literature has been a battle long drawn out. It is the fashion to attribute this to dissensions amongst her natural defenders, with little allowance for the fact that during this period two nations have divided the country between them. All the literary advantages were on the side of those whose preconceptions and national prejudices stood in the way of historical justice. When, therefore, in our own times the imprisoned Catholic intellect of Ireland was emancipated, the historical field was already occupied. In matters of faith an unerring instinct preserved her sons from error. Not so with history. They were obliged to make the best of what came to hand, or else do without it altogether. It is weary work to be for ever doubting, and impatience has betrayed many Irish Catholic writers into making admissions which have seriously injured their own cause. Take, for instance, Dr. Lanigan's account of the question now under consideration. The fourth volume of his *Ecclesiastical History of*

Ireland is almost entirely devoted to the events of the twelfth century. The great learning and acuteness of this writer certainly entitle him to the prominent position among Irish Church historians which has been allotted to him by Cardinal Moran,¹ although his writings are often deficient in that comprehensive and judicial spirit which distinguishes the Cardinal himself. For many years after the publication of his work in 1829, Dr. Lanigan was probably the dominant authority amongst modern Irish ecclesiastical writers, and, as some of the ground which he has occupied has hitherto been little investigated, it would appear that on these points he is still allowed to reign supreme. This was the case as regards the "Bull" of Adrian IV., until, in 1872, Cardinal Moran's Dissertation appeared. Amongst others, Cardinal Newman has adopted the conclusions of Dr. Lanigan on this subject in his luminous disquisition on the "Northmen and Normans in England and Ireland," which was published in 1856. Dr. Lanigan's account of the state of Ireland previous to the irruption of Normans is fair and dispassionate, and if he had made a selection of his authorities, expanding valuable evidence, and ignoring many contemptible opponents, his history of this period would leave little to

¹ *Essays on Irish Church*, p. 46.

be desired. He disposes of the allegations against the Irish Church drawn from the writings of St. Anselm: he follows out the history of the Danish settlements, and of the evil customs introduced into Ireland by these foreigners, and illustrates very clearly the pre-eminence of the Roman Legates in Ireland in the twelfth century, and the singular veneration in which they were held.¹ When, however, he reaches the period of Pope Adrian, it is clear that he is blinded by that indignation which sometimes disturbs the wisest mind. Thus he writes: "Although Adrian IV. had such a regard for his old master Marianus, he was then concerned in hatching a plot against that good man's country—in laying the foundation of the destruction of that country. . . . It is strange that the Pope could have listened to such stuff, &c. . . . But the love of his country (England), his wish to gratify Henry, and some other not very becoming reasons, prevailed over every other consideration."

Dr. Lanigan is so angry with the Pope that he dismisses with contempt every argument in his favour, and in answer to Cambrensis Eversus, and MacGeoghegan, he rashly affirms of the "Bull," that "never did there exist a more real and authentic document." He argues that there must have been a copy in the Vatican library, because

¹ *Eccl. Hist.*, vol. iv. pp. 32, 34, 43, 55, &c

Pope John XXII. alludes to it a hundred and sixty-four years after its alleged appearance;¹ whereas the Pope's letter merely accepts the statement as it stands in the letter addressed to him by the Irish leaders, amongst whom some believed and some doubted. The Pope's letter, like so many of the documents bearing on this subject, has evidently been tampered with. As it stands in Wilkins's collection of English Councils, the Pope is made to say that Adrian "granted" (*concessit*) to Henry; in the continuator of Baronius, the words are "is said to have granted" (*concessisse dicitur*).² The official Roman form, when the fact is neither denied nor affirmed.

In like manner, Dr. Lanigan accepts without question that which he styles the "genuine and correct text of Giraldus," as evidence of the letter of Alexander III.³ to Henry II. Now, this is one of the very few points on which Giraldus Cambrensis himself manifests anything approaching to intellectual diffidence. "By some," he says, "it is asserted, or pretended that this (Brief) was obtained, while others deny that it was ever asked for."⁴ Dr.

¹ *Eccl. Hist.* iv. pp. 159, 165.

² *Analecta Juris Pont.* Maii 1882. *Mag. Brit. Concilia*, an. 1319. *Reynaldus*, an. 1317.

³ *Eccl. Hist.* iv. 223.

⁴ *Giraldus De Institut. Principum*, p. 52.

Lanigan also adopts the inventions of Giraldus, as regards the policy of the Papal Legate, Cardinal Vivian.

The learned and dispassionate English Protestant editor of Giraldus Cambrensis may well wonder at the amount of credence which Irish writers have given to the Cambrian romancer, and court flatterer.¹ As regards the letter of Alexander III., Dr. Lanigan is even more credulous than Giraldus himself. He seems to have had a fixed idea that everyone's hand must have been against Ireland. This prejudice has coloured and seriously marred his otherwise valuable testimony, and has led him unintentionally to play into the hands of the calumniators of ancient Catholic Ireland. We have seen that St. Laurence and her own annalists treated the incursion of the Norman adventurers as one of the ordinary occurrences of a lawless age. The Irish of that day were the best judges as to the origin of their misfortunes; and as they, in the twelfth century, did not accuse Pope Adrian, or get out of temper with the Holy See, it is quite clear that there is no reason now that we should start this grievance after the lapse of seven centuries.

We now part company with the "Spurious Bull of Adrian," and it is to be hoped that the reader has

¹ The Rev. James F. Dimock. *Op. Giraldi*, Pref. 72.

had some share in the pleasure which the investigation has imparted to the writer. It is a subject eminently calculated to clear up the historical horizon in many directions. It teaches that, while prescription is often the only safe law in politics, it has no place in the more exalted world of letters, in whose courts the right of appeal is unlimited. It reminds us that, in historical trials, the characters of both plaintiff and defendant are essential elements, and that the good name and consistency of witnesses is of more importance than numbers. If the documentary evidence for the "Bull" was as strong as it is suspicious, it would still be weak when set against the amazing incongruity of the supposition that the only interference in the government of the Church in Ireland, on the part of one of the most vigilant, cautious, and far-seeing of the Roman Pontiffs, was to hand her over, with his own Legate, her Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and Religious Orders, to the spiritual direction and supervision of a Royal and Secular Commissioner, in the shape of the young Henry Plantagenet; and this at the very time when, as we have learned from St. Thomas of Canterbury, John of Salisbury, and Roger of Pontigny, the character of the young king was exciting grave and too well-founded apprehensions in the minds of authorities in the Church, and of all friends of religious liberty.

CHAPTER III.

ST. PATRICK'S WORK, PAST AND PRESENT.

I.

ST. PATRICK'S life suggests many grave questions, but none are more important than the inquiry into what he has done. Apart from his work, there can be no honest loyalty to the Saint—no rational vindication of his mission. He is the sole Parent of the Religion of Ireland, past and present, and that religion, more than any other influence, is responsible for her sorrowful and mysterious history. We start, therefore, with this question—Has St. Patrick's work in Ireland, that is, St. Patrick's religion, been a success and a blessing? for with it the Saint must stand or fall. It would be waste of words to discuss where that religion is now to be found. It is enough to ask—Were the Saint to appear again at Tara, or Croagh Patrick, amongst whom would he find his disciples and followers? There can be but one answer. That austere and unearthly form, in his rough *casula* of camel's hair, received from St.

Martin, which, like another Elias, looks out upon us from the pages of the *Tripartite Life* and the *Book of Armagh*, would frighten his opulent and merely æsthetic admirers out of their propriety. It is the poor who would welcome him as their deliverer; for adversity is the native soil of the religion which St. Patrick preached.

That the following vindication of St. Patrick's work should often read like an apology is inevitable. It is the fate, shall we say the sad fate of Ireland, to be for ever condemned to the humiliation of that self-defence, at which scornful adversaries sneer as if it were mere vulgar self-assertion. She is poor, and, as it is with the poor at all times, her character is her life. She cannot, like her proud English sister, afford to despise the judgments of men; and so pity makes many suppliants for her sake at the bar of public opinion, whose convictions, if they had fair play, would elevate them into assailants and accusers.

It is hardly too much to say that of all Christian nations Ireland has suffered most for religion, and received least of those temporal gifts and consolations which, at times, have followed in the train of the Gospel. Even in her brightest days, the three centuries preceding the descent of the Northern barbarians, the Irish Church was noted for its poverty and austerity; indeed, it is a matter of

history that the severe discipline of the disciples of SS. Columba and Columbanus often made them very unpopular in England and on the Continent. It was impossible that those missionary monks could be anything else than poor. In those days there were no baggage trains to carry their *impedimenta*, even if they had possessed them, as is fondly imagined by writers who would have us believe that the monks of old were models of domestic life and connubial felicity. With the Normans came some increase of external splendour; but the reproach of riches and luxury has never been imputed to the Irish Church. The invaders themselves had few of the vices of luxury; they were a hardy and warlike race, and with all their faults they did not debase and corrupt the vigour of the Christian character.¹ Thus in an unbroken Catholic life of more than fourteen centuries the Church of St. Patrick has been always either poor, or in conflict—the sun of earthly prosperity has never yet shone upon her.

No doubt, to some this will appear a most humiliating acknowledgment, tantamount to a confession that St. Patrick's work has been a failure, as

¹ See the touching and heroic speech of Gerald, Earl of Kildare, when arraigned before Henry VIII. in Council by Cardinal Wolsey. (*The Earls of Kildare*, by the Marquis of Kildare, p. 103. Dublin, 1864.)

if a similar reproach had never been levelled at Christianity itself in her primitive and parent form, although the early Church escapes the absolute and universal contempt which is so common in the case of the poverty-stricken Church of Ireland. In the past the mere æsthetical admirer of Christianity sees the fruit upon the tree, without being reminded of the humble and laborious operations of the husbandman, and he can be eloquent in his admiration of the Christian religion, as represented by Constantine and Charlemagne, and the monks and bishops who converted our barbarian ancestors into chivalrous knights and Christian women, or taught them to build palaces to God in the wilderness. It is the Christian religion represented by the Crucifix which disappoints the hopes and chills the hearts of those whose aspirations never rise beyond the level of a terrestrial paradise. The honour which such people pay to the Church is merely homage to her temporal gifts. It is good if it goes farther, it is false if it stops short, for a religion which ends with this world is no religion at all. Moreover, such gifts, as evidence, are no signs of a divine origin. In the great rulers she has formed, and in her ministrations of temporal favours, the Church has had rivals: if Charlemagne was great, so was Augustus before him; and in some respects Greek art outrivals that of the middle ages. Exteriorly,

it is not so much by what the Church gives as by what she takes away, or inspires men to do without, that she manifests her divinity. It is plain that these were the principles of ordinary Christians in the first ages of the Church, as well as of the inspired Apostles: they had no experience of anything save conflict and suffering, and no other expectations; and however much the world may have changed since their time, there has been no change in Christianity. If, therefore, it can be proved that, while Ireland has been "the most faithful of all the nations that have received the Revelation from Heaven," she has been, at the same time, the most enduring representative of the suffering Primitive Church, it is only reasonable to expect that her spiritual endowments should be similar.¹

If the simplicity and austerity of the early Irish Church reminds us of the Primitive Church, in the last three centuries the resemblance has become even more striking. We have the same spectacle

¹ It is very remarkable that this parallel should have occurred to Edmund Burke. Writing to Bishop Hussey, in 1795, he observes, "I wish very much to see, before my death, an image of a Primitive Christian Church. With little improvements, I think the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland very capable of exhibiting that state of things. I should not by force, or fraud, or rapine have ever reduced them to their present state of things. God forbid! But being in it, I conceive that much may be made of it to the glory of religion and the good of the State." (*Correspondence*. Ed. by Earl Fitzwilliam, iv. p. 284.)

of persecution and development, and under similar conditions. In both cases there was no sort of equality between the contending parties. On one side there was absolute power, and on the other resistance without hope, as far as this life was concerned. Moreover, in both instances the persecutor and the persecuted were inextricably commingled, so that the latter could never escape observation. Dr. Johnson, an unprejudiced witness, does not scruple to say that "there is no instance, even in the ten persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against Catholics."¹ And yet, as the Primitive Church grew in the Catacombs of Rome, and in the cities, villages, and armies of the empire, so was it with the Church in Ireland under the penal laws. If at any time she seemed doomed to extinction, it was in the first half of the eighteenth century. Her devotion to the cause of the Stuarts had involved Ireland in calamities almost as great as those inflicted by Elizabeth and Cromwell. "The best calculators," says Edmund Burke, "compute that Ireland lost 200,000 of her inhabitants in the struggle."² But her losses in the field were small compared to the exodus that succeeded. The astounding statement of the Abbe MacGeoghegan,

¹ *Life by Boswell.* Croker, p. 263.

² *Irish Affairs.* Ed. by Matthew Arnold, p. 370.

founded on researches made at the French War Office, to the effect that between 1691 and 1745 more than 450,000 Irishmen died in the service of France, seems at first sight incredible; but the more we study the contemporary domestic records of Ireland, the less we are inclined to doubt the evidence of this very careful and dispassionate writer.¹ At this time the Irish Protestant Primate Boulter informs the Archbishop of Canterbury that in Ireland "many venture to go into foreign service at the risk of their lives." In the same strain he

¹ *History of Ireland*, p. 599. MacGeoghegan was chaplain to the Irish Brigade in the middle of the last century, and O'Curry regards him as one of the few Irish modern historians who can be read "without mischief." (*MS. Materials*, p. 441.) He has the rare gift of being moderate while smarting under injustice. He avoids those passionate recriminations by which Irish writers have involved friends and foes in common obloquy. He vindicates the descendants of the Norman nobles, who came over with Strongbow, under unreasonable accusations. In many ways they were superior to their brethren in England, and if a Shakespeare ever arises in Ireland, he will easily find more generous and chivalrous characters in the ranks of her warlike knights than the English bard has been able to discover amongst the English nobility, from the days of King John to those of Henry VIII. *Childera* and *Desmonda* are found in the pages of Ariosto; and it is of these same Geraldines, sprung from the union of Maurice Fitzgerald with the grand-daughter of Murrough O'Brien, King of Ireland, that the national poet Davis writes:—

"But never then, nor never yet, has falsehood or disgrace
Been seen to soil Fitzgerald's plume, or mantle in his face."

I doubt whether any family in the empire can show such a long line of heroic and chivalrous characters as are found in that simple and unadorned record, *The Earls of Kildare*, by the Marquis of Kildare.

writes to the Duke of Newcastle. Mr. Lecky quotes a contemporary writer of the period, to the effect that 20,000 recruits had departed from the county of Cork alone, and about the same number had embarked with Sarsfield at Limerick, in 1691; and these contingents were probably immensely outnumbered by the recruits periodically carried off by French vessels from the lonely and unprotected harbours of Ireland. And yet it was at this very time, when Ireland had lost her natural leaders, and was being drained of her wisest and bravest sons, that the Primate Boulter writes to tell the Duke of Newcastle that the Protestant Church in Ireland was in danger, and that unless greater efforts were made, "instead of getting ground of the Papists, we must lose to them, as in fact we do in many places, the descendants of many of *Cromwell's* officers and soldiers here being gone off to Popery."¹

With the fall of the Stuarts, and the subsequent exodus, ended the mixed Celtic and Norman Church of Ireland. Of the past the poor alone remained,²

¹ *Letters of Hugh Boulter, D.D.*, vol. i. pp. 179, 181. The Primate italicises the name of "*Cromwell*," as if to mark his bewilderment. Dean Swift, in his *Modest Proposal*, also mentions Irish foreign enlistment.

² The catalogue of the names of Irish noblemen, in MacGeoghegan's dedication of his *History*, is a touching record of what he styles their "fidelity to unhappy masters." Exiles, although not

and thus the Irish Church of to-day is truly the daughter of adversity—the offspring of the stern espousals of Irish poverty and English penal laws. It is with this Church, “compassed with infirmity,” that we are now concerned when there is question of the results of St. Patrick’s mission. The fact that she stood, not merely unshaken, but conquering under the penal laws, was another manifestation of that inherent energy which in the past had melted down the barbarian Danes and the chivalrous Normans, making them *Hibernis hiberniores*. In the eighteenth century Catholic Ireland returned to her primitive condition, and it is no exaggeration to say that her religious developments and triumphs since then have been quite as wonderful and unaccountable as in the centuries which followed the death of St. Patrick. The fact that they are not recognised and admired by rationalistic writers and worshippers of material progress is not surprising. If the semi-pagan philosophy of St. Jerome’s time had survived the barbarians, and been carried on into the sixth and seventh centuries, its votaries and exponents would probably have been equally

inglorious in their banishment, we find them sometimes leading, always inspiring the armies of France, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Naples, and Sardinia, while their castles and lands in Ireland were given over to an unwarlike and mushroom nobility, who had no characteristics calculated to inspire loyalty in the case of a people eminently chivalrous, and aristocratic in their tastes and traditions.

short-sighted in their estimate, and scant in their notices of the work and influence of St. Columba and St. Columbanus. That religion of the "Irish Celts," which even in the eyes of Mr. Froude "burnt like a star in Western Europe,"¹ was in its day quite as little regarded by the luxurious and fastidious as it is in our own; to such people nothing but the enchantment of distance can make Christianity, with all its severe requisitions, attractive or even endurable.

A systematic defence of the moral condition of any people seems, at first sight, an impossible undertaking. National poets and novelists, if true to life, carry conviction by those "reasons of the heart which reason cannot comprehend"; but a serious vindication of a nation is something like the canonisation of a multitude. If it is hard to prove that any one man is better than his fellows, the difficulty is immeasurably increased when we are dealing with millions. Evidence from statistics of virtue and vice is confined to a very limited field, and its application requires that we should be in a position accurately to weigh the influence of circumstances. We must have evidence of a more universal character, embracing the many folds of a nation's life. It must be wide and deep, and at the same time dispassionate. Now, perhaps, there

¹ *English in Ireland*, i. p. 16.

is no country in the world where we have so many advantages in this respect as in Ireland. Her proximity and connection with England, and a community of language, have for centuries made Ireland a favourite and convenient hunting-ground for British Protestant explorers, and favourable evidence in the writings of such witnesses is above suspicion.

Those only who have made a special study of this branch of literature can have any idea of the number of writers of this class who bear witness to the grace and charm and extraordinary spiritual endowments of the poverty-stricken peasantry of Ireland. Indeed, I do not know of any dissentient witnesses amongst those who have made it their business to study them in their own homes, and not merely from railway carriages, hotels, and drawing-room windows. This is all the more remarkable when we reflect that for three hundred years British prejudice against Ireland has been inspired by that horror of the Catholic Church which is identified with the life of the nation. The Irish have been the embodiment of that "raw head and bloody bones" phantom of Popery, which, like an enduring nightmare, haunts the English popular imagination from the cradle to the grave. Few nations have been so long, and so absolutely under priestly influence as the Irish; that domination

which Mr. Thomas Carlyle describes as "the foul tutelage" of "the dirty, muddy-minded, semi-felonious, proselytising Irish Priest."¹ If anywhere Catholicity is to be seen in its native fruits, it is in Ireland, where for so many centuries it has been the sole social and moral power.

A discussion like the present is useless unless it is fearless and uncompromising, and we must be prepared to give and to take hard blows. It is essentially a contest of principles, and in such conflicts amongst Christians there is no place for concordats. Polytheists may make peace one with the other, and interchange their gods; but belief in one God implies one truth, as the revelation of One Supreme Mind, and so with division concerning its interpretation comes the inevitable struggle for supremacy. We shall be merely going round in a circle if we say that the poor Catholics of Ireland are good, bad and indifferent like the poor all over the world; unless we can prove that the Catholic

¹ *Reminiscences*, ii. 268. Admirers of Carlyle may object that it is hardly fair to take such violent expressions as evidence of his opinions, and that the man who seems to have understood Dante, and to have worshipped him with genuine loyalty of head and heart, could not seriously despise his religion, even in an Irish dress. It is certain that Carlyle had glimpses of deep and sacred mysteries underlying Irish life; but he was not a Christian, and so he had no eyes to discover either truth or beauty in poverty and affliction, and as he made himself the mouthpiece of vulgar prejudice his memory must bear the shame.

religion has done something special and singular for them, we shall have proved nothing.

In the first place, however, we must settle what we are to expect from the Catholic religion under circumstances such as we find in Ireland. It is not a peaceful Paraguay that we are about to contemplate : neither can Ireland be compared to Italy, or the Tyrol, and those Catholic countries where religious disunion and disturbances have often been unknown for generations. Since the Danish invasions in the beginning of the ninth century, that is, for nearly eleven hundred years, Ireland has been the prey of the perennial destroyer, in one shape or another. Very unreasonable, therefore, are they who taunt her with the nakedness and desolation of her shrines and sanctuaries, and the poverty of her arts and literature. The poet bewails the wrongs of Italy, the inheritance of "her fatal gift of beauty"; but her wounds have been skin-deep compared to those of Ireland. In Ireland nothing remains to the people of their Catholic past, save neglected and dishonoured ruins, on a soil which is no longer their own, while the Italian still worships in those churches and shrines of his ancestors, which elevate and instruct the soul more than the poetry of Dante, or the paintings of Raphael. If, therefore, we desire to estimate the fruits of Catholicity in Ireland we have nothing to study save the moral condition of

her people, and of all investigations this is the one which demands the most patient, profound, and dispassionate attention.

After much reflection and many attempts at a statement of the case of Ireland, I have come to the conclusion that the best way of getting to the point is to select one antagonist who may fittingly hold the place of *Advocatus diaboli*, and it would be impossible to find any one so well suited for the office as Mr. Froude, the author of the *English in Ireland*. It is well known that this veteran enemy of the Catholic Church was for a time one of that historic party which followed Cardinal Newman in those years when the energies of the best intellect of England were devoted to the study of the claims of the Catholic Church. Mr. Froude, therefore, is no mere ignorant and blundering assailant of Catholicity: he knows how and where to strike.

I am fully alive to the fact that those who are acquainted with Irish history will think it waste of time to answer Mr. Froude; and I should agree with them if we were dealing with historic facts. In the present instance, however, it is with prejudices, not with facts, that we are concerned, and our best plan is to meet them in the person of their most popular exponent—one who boldly gives expression to those ideas that are latent, but not the less dominant in other minds. If I knew

of a more worthy antagonist, I should certainly select him; but the honoured names of English literature are not to be found in the list of her party historians. The historian is a judge in that august tribunal before which the silent and defenceless dead are summoned, and he who in that solemn office betrays his trust, sooner or later incurs the contempt and execration of mankind. Lord Macaulay is, perhaps, a little vehement when he denounces a bad translation of a modern historical work as being "just as discreditable to the moral character of the person from whom it proceeds as a false affidavit or a forged bill of exchange"; but no one will regard the condemnation as too strong when applied to the corrupt historian, who, professing to draw his information from the fountains of a nation's history, perverts it in order to assail that nation's character.

This is the enormity which is laid at the door of Mr. Froude by no less an authority than Mr. Lecky, who, perhaps, of all living historians has most thoroughly exhausted that period of Irish history which had been held in captivity by Mr. Froude. Mr. Lecky has devoted to Ireland some three hundred pages of the second volume of his *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, as an integral and essential part of the history of the sister isle, and the numerous and learned notes in

this volume in which he has deemed it necessary to drag Mr. Froude from his entrenchments, are something almost unique in an historical work. It is plain that Mr. Lecky was impressed with the conviction that unless he could take Mr. Froude from off the public brain it was vain to attempt to write the history of Ireland.

The following are some of Mr. Lecky's strictures: "Mr. Froude's *English in Ireland* is intended to collect and aggravate everything that can be said against the Irish people, and accordingly the atrocities on the English side are reduced in that book to the smallest proportions." "His *English in Ireland*, which is intended to blacken to the utmost the character of the Irish people, and especially of the Irish Catholics." Again, alluding to the causes of the rising of 1641, as found in Hallam, Carte's *Ormond*, and Lord Castlehaven, Mr. Lecky observes of Mr. Froude: "The reader must form his own judgment of the writer, who, with a full knowledge of these facts, has published the following as a true account of the rebellion of 1641. 'The Catholics were indulged to the uttermost, and therefore rebelled!'"¹

The history of this insurrection, preserved in thirty-three volumes of so-called "Depositions" in

¹ Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii. pp. 95, 127 (nn.).

Trinity College, is the favourite hunting ground of Mr. Froude. He informs us that it is "the gravest event in Irish history, the turning-point on which all later controversies between England and Ireland hinge."¹ How the history of more than two centuries can "hinge" upon gossip of this description is difficult to see; but his language is only too true as regards the party to which he belongs. Ireland seems doomed to bear for ever the weight of those thirty-three volumes. There they remain in the treasury of Trinity College, "the turning-point" of Anglo-Irish controversy for more than two centuries. But who has read them? Apparently not Mr. Froude,² and at this distant period who is capable of passing judgment on these historic mummies?

In the middle of the last century Edmund Burke had better opportunities for forming an opinion. Himself a student at Trinity College, his immediate ancestors had been witnesses of the events of 1641, and the following is his judgment on what he stigmatises as—

"The rascally collection in the College, relative to the pretended massacre in 1641 . . . I am sure, wicked as they are and mostly hearsay, they refute

¹ Froude, *English in Ireland*, p. 91.

² "Mr. Froude does not appear himself to have examined these depositions" (Lecky, ii. 154, n.).

fully the false stories produced on their credit by Temple. Leland went over them with me, and poor Bowdens, long since dead. We agreed about them, but when he (Leland) began to write history he thought only of himself and the bookseller, for his history was written at my earnest desire, but the mode of doing it varied from his first conceptions." ¹

Again, Mr. Lecky observes: "By suppressing absolutely the name of the original Protestant authority, by substituting for it that of a Catholic copyist, who never pretended to have himself examined the original depositions, and by coupling this substitution with an attack upon Catholicism, an impression is given which is (to use the mildest term) misleading." In the matter of "one of the most important documents," in the evidence regarding the insurrection of 1641, Mr. Lecky observes: "Mr. Froude has dealt with it in his usual manner—suppressing the evidence—and no trace of it will be found in his history."

Again, in a little bit of by-play regarding the destruction of Irish woods by speculators, "Mr. Froude," says Mr. Lecky, "with his usual accuracy and candour, attributes the demolition of the Irish woods exclusively to the perversity of the native

¹ *Correspondence*, Ed. by Lord Fitzwilliam, iii. 441.

Irish." "The sun," says Mr. Froude, "never shone on a lovelier country as nature made it; they have pared its forests to the stump, till it shivers in damp and desolation!"

"Again," says Mr. Lecky, "it suits the purpose of Mr. Froude's book to exaggerate . . . and he has given his case an appearance of great plausibility by garbling one of the documents he quotes." Finally, *in re* Archbishop King and his moderately anti-Catholic party, Mr. Lecky bids farewell to Mr. Froude with the words: "Mr. Froude has, at the same time, withheld all the real arguments by which they justify their course."¹

Mr. Lecky has done our work for us by unveiling and answering Mr. Froude in detail, and this with a force and authority which, under the circumstances, could hardly attach to any Catholic writer. Perhaps we may thank Mr. Lecky for the fact that Mr. Froude has now come out in his real character as a writer of historical romance. The novel has of late been a powerful engine in the hands of literary smugglers of every description, and their success has evidently inspired Mr. Froude with the hope that history, like foreign infidelity and such-like commodities, may be used to season a story.

¹ *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*. London: Longmans, 1878. Vol. ii. pp. 95, 101, 154, 169, 231, 397, 408 (nn.). See also pp. 127, 166, 361, 371, 376 (nn.).

But he has made a strange mistake. History must stand in the place of substance, not of accident—we can accommodate his clothes to a man, but not a man to his clothes.

Mr. Froude has constructed an Irish romance¹ on the foundations of his *English in Ireland*, and the novel, even more than Mr. Lecky, has brought shame on his history. If, to return to Mr. Lecky, “Mr. Froude’s *English in Ireland* is intended to blacken to the utmost the character of the Irish people, and especially of Irish Catholics,” in his novel he luxuriates in the hideous caricature which he himself has painted. In the enthusiasm of his hate he has over-reached himself. His *English in Ireland*, which is merely a sort of Irish Newgate Calendar, is sometimes true as far as facts are concerned. It is what Mr. Lecky styles the “garbling” of the evidence and the “withholding of the real arguments” on the Catholic side, which makes it not so much history as an *ex parte* and deceptive brief in a criminal prosecution.

When, however, in a novel the sins of generations are concentrated in individuals, by an author skilled in sounding the depravity of the human heart, the result is so monstrous that our common nature revolts at the outrage. There never were

¹ *The Two Chiefs of Dunboy*. An Irish Romance of the Last Century.

rational beings so loathsome and detestable as the Irish Catholics in Mr. Froude's romance. It will, perhaps, be suggested that such exaggerations are suicidal, and may be let alone, and that it is hardly reasonable to treat a novel as a serious indictment against a nation. To which I answer, in the first place, that although few people believe all, there are many who believe a great deal that Mr. Froude says; and secondly, that his romance is no ordinary work of fiction: it is the embodiment of his Irish historical productions, into which he has infused a life like that which is generated by putrefaction, and equally dangerous.

A few extracts will put the reader in possession of Mr. Froude's indictment. At p. 76 he introduces us to the Irish poor on the lawn before his hero's drawing-room window, as follows:—

“Savages, but not ‘noble savages,’ whose human nature had to be admitted—but admitted reluctantly. . . . All had their tale of misfortune, probably most of it lies. But it was low water with the whole of them; you could see that plainly enough, waifs and strays as they were, of Irish destiny, helplessly passive as the draggled jelly-fish left dry by the tide.”

At p. 156 his hero, Colonel Goring, muses upon Ireland, and his reflections take shape as follows:—

“The island was like a sleeping volcano. . . .

English rule had done it all, so said the priests. But it was not so, for their own annals, written by themselves before the strangers had come among them, told of riving and blood-shedding as their only occupation and their only glory."

Again, at the sight of some ancient Irish monuments, he continues to moralise :—

"Some hand or other had piled the mounds where, if you tunnelled, you found caves littered with bones, gnawed by creatures which had borne at least a human form,¹ but who were they, and whence had they come? Apostles had come and preached Christianity to these beings. They were said to have transformed them for a time into a nobler type. Ireland, it was alleged, had become an island of Saints. She had sent missionaries over Europe, and when the pagans over-ran the Roman world, and buried it in heathendom again, the Gospel light had burned clear and white in this wild, western land. So the priests pretended, and yet the annals told the same story. Neither then nor at any time had the Irish chiefs and their followers been other than wolves, devouring one another when no sheep were left for them to devour."²

¹ How does Mr. Froude distinguish the marks of Irishmen's teeth from those of their wolf-dogs? he aims at outstripping Cuvier.

² There is a curious discrepancy between this statement and p. 16 of Mr. Froude's *English in Ireland*, to which I have already alluded (p. 157). Even Mr. Froude, writing as an historian, seems sometimes to have a sense of the dignity and obligations of his office.

Then, in the flowing stream of his story, we have the corollaries to these principles—such as perjury and lying, which the priest can “set straight,” and cowardice, with its vile attendant vices (pp. 49, 104, 203, 229), until again we see before us the “mere Irishman” of the “Pale,” whom to kill was held to be no crime, because, in the words of Bishop Milner, “they were supposed by the vulgar to be orang-outangs, or brutes of some species or other.” Indeed, when we weigh Mr. Froude’s words, it is plain that his ideas run very much in this direction: his romance, like some of the comic papers of the day, manifests the same reluctance, as he expresses it, to admit the claims of the Irish Catholic poor to a participation in either the moral or physical characteristics of the family of mankind.

II.

Perhaps the reader has had enough of Mr. Froude. Prosecutors, as a rule, find it easy to be at once brief in their proofs, and comprehensive in their indictments. It is time to begin the case for the accused, although the mind revolts at the thought that it should be necessary to answer such accusations—and strange to say the first witness that appears is Mr. Froude himself. This prolific writer has taken up the subject of Ireland at intervals during the last

twenty years. He has certainly run through her history, as is evident from the labour it has cost Mr. Lecky to refute him ; but when we set his pronouncements at different periods one against the other, we are fain to ask—Is Mr. Froude really in earnest? Up to September, 1880, the Irish Celts, in the many-coloured pages of Mr. Froude, are the same unredeemed monsters, in the past as well as the present, but at this date he breaks out in the following strain :—

“ The Irish people are said to be unfit for freedom—of course they are, but it is we who have unfitted them. It is our bitterest reproach that we have made the name of Irishmen a world's byword. There is no reason in the nature of things why Irishmen, whenever they are spoken of, should suggest the ideas of idleness and turbulence. The Celts of Ireland, before the Teutonic nations meddled with them, were not a great people ; they had built no cities, &c. . . . They quarrelled and fought ; war was their glory, and the killing of enemies the single theme of their bards' triumphal songs. But contemporary nations were not very far in advance of them. English life in those times has been described by high authority as the scuffling of kites and crows ; before Charlemagne, France and Germany and Italy were but stages on which each summer brought its scene of battlefields. The Irish were no

worse than their neighbours, and they had the germs of a civilisation of a peculiarly interesting kind. Their laws, however afterwards corrupted, were humane and equitable as they came from the first Brehons. They became Christians sooner than the Saxons. There were schools of learning among them, where students gathered from all parts of Europe; and Irish missionaries carried the Gospel into Scotland and Germany. Their literature speaks for itself; the ancient Irish hymns and songs compare not unfavourably with the *Edda*; their Latin hagiology, their lives of St. Patrick and St. Bride and St. Colomb contain, amidst many extravagances, genuine and admirable human traits of manner and character."

Again, of Ireland in the last century he writes: "Excellent schools were established, where brilliantly-gifted men were trained to do honour to their native land. Strike the Anglo-Irish names from the rolls of fame in the last century, and we lose our foremost statesmen, scholars, soldiers, artists, lawyers, poets, men of letters."¹

Such were Mr. Froude's opinions in 1880, three years subsequent to the appearance of his *English in Ireland*. Then, in 1884, after an interval of four years, the *English in Ireland* again makes its

¹ "Ireland," by J. A. Froude, *Nineteenth Century*, September, 1880, pp. 342, 358.

appearance in a new edition, and in 1889 is born the loathsome romance of which I have given an analysis. I repeat, either Mr. Froude is making sport with English prejudice, or else he is himself subject to intermittent attacks of that anti-Irish insanity so graphically described by Sidney Smith. "The moment the very name of Ireland is mentioned," says the Canon of St. Paul's, "the English seem to bid adieu to common feeling, common prudence, and common sense." ¹

Here, then, we have the only "scientific" historical antagonist of Ireland, and his statements at different periods are so irreconcilable that we have two authorities instead of one, in such manifest contradiction that, were Mr. Froude capable of a calm survey of even his own books, the writer of 1877-1889, if I may be allowed the simile, could not possibly look the writer of 1880 in the face without laughing. The mental equilibrium of the author of the *Nemesis of Faith* is evidently disturbed. He seems to be in terror of the Church: tormented by that power which once nearly subdued him. In 1877 he writes: "From a combination of causes—some creditable to them, some other than creditable—the Irish Celts possess on their own soil a power, greater than any other known family of mankind,

¹ *Works*, vol. iii. p. 291.

of assimilating those who venture among them to their own image.”¹ Here it is plain that he does not fear “assimilation” to that “roll of statesmen, scholars, soldiers,” &c., whom he hails as “foremost” in the empire: it is the dread fascination of the Irish Catholic Celt which appals him; like the pagan in Callista, who cries out: “No one’s safe; anyone may be a Christian; it is an epidemic. Great Jove! I may be a Christian before I know where I am.”

Mr. Froude is right when he says that the Irish Celts exceed all other nations in their power of assimilating strangers. It is historically true. Danes, Normans, Elizabethan and Cromwellian settlers, and German Palatines have all become *Hibernis hiberniores*; and yet, humanly speaking, the odds were always on the side of the strangers, and that in an ever-increasing ratio as time went on until the eighteenth century, when the last spark of Celtic life seemed extinguished in Ireland.

The question we have now to answer is—What is the nature of this conquering moral influence: is it the result of an immortal principle, or is it merely decay and death involving successive generations of victims?

If we regard merely the surface of things, it seems plausible enough to say that, like drowning

¹ *English in Ireland*, i. p. 22.

men, the Irish have pulled down all who came amongst them: but as has been seen, in his lucid intervals even Mr. Froude will not allow this, and on this point all unprejudiced writers agree with him. The miseries of Ireland have been made for her. For more than a thousand years every successive invader brought destruction and death in his train, but life has ever reappeared like the verdure on the desolate battlefield. Her history has no parallel. Spain bears the nearest resemblance, but Spain was only partially in the hands of the Saracen; and Christian France, close at hand, was alternately an auxiliary and a base for retreat; while crusaders flocked to her standard from the most distant provinces of Christendom;¹ but Ireland in all her conflicts has trodden the wine-press alone.

Mr. Froude is not the first who has been amazed at the inherent power of assimilation possessed by the Irish Celts. Augustin Thierry alludes to that *penchant irrésistible à s'assimiler*, which subjugated the Norman knights in Ireland.² It has continued in force to our own times; and no one seems to me to interpret the mystery better than Mr. Lecky. Referring to "those qualities that attract and fascinate the stranger" and "brighten

¹ Prescott, *History of Ferdinand and Isabella*, i. p. 11.

² *Conquête d'Angleterre par les Normands*, iv. 241.

and soften the daily intercourse of life" in Ireland, he observes :—

"It was impossible, as we have seen, that the habits of respect for law, which had already been created in England, and which were gradually forming in Scotland, should have grown up under the shadow of the penal laws. . . . But qualities which are perhaps not less valuable were developed under the discipline of sorrow. . . . Under the influence of the religious spirit which was now pervading the nation a great moral revolution was silently effected. A standard of domestic virtue, a delicacy of female honour, was gradually formed among the Irish poor, higher than in any other part of the empire, and unsurpassed, if not unequalled, in Europe. The very extension of poverty and mendicancy had produced among them a rare and touching spirit of charity, readiness to share with one another the last crust and the last potato. Domestic affections were more than commonly warm. The memorable fact that in the present century not less than twenty millions of pounds have been sent back in the space of twenty years by those who went for the most part as penniless emigrants to America to their relatives in Ireland illustrates a side of the Irish character which was already noticed by many observers ; and in modern times, concerning which alone we can speak with

confidence, infanticide, desertion, wife-murder, and other crimes indicating a low state of domestic morality, have been much rarer among the Irish poor than among the corresponding classes in England." ¹

We have here, not the enthusiastic panegyric of a fervent Catholic, but the deliberate judgment of a man very far removed from sympathy with Catholicism. He has compressed into a few paragraphs ideas which we find in various forms in many other writers as little favourable as himself to the Catholic Church. When strangers and outsiders give us the results of their speculations on the fruits of Catholicism, there is a reality and vividness of colouring in their pictures which cannot be found in the writings of Catholics. The principle of *nemo judex in propria causa* is true of nations and communities as well as of individuals, and human virtue can never praise itself with

¹ *England in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. p. 315. In a preceding page (281) Mr. Lecky says of the Penal Code: "All the higher and nobler life of the community lay beyond its pale. Illegal combination was consecrated when it was essential to the performance of religious duty. Illegal violence was the natural protection against immoral laws. Eternal salvation, in the eyes of the great majority of the Irish, could only be obtained by a course of conduct condemned by the law. . . . It rendered absolutely impossible in Ireland the formation of that habit of instinctive and unreasoning reverence for law which is one of the most essential conditions of English civilisation."

propriety: even under unjust accusation, defence is its only privilege.

The evidence of the morality of the Irish poor has so accumulated in our own times that I believe the common judgment of mankind goes beyond that of Mr. Lecky, and is ready to acknowledge, without any qualification, that in the domain of domestic morals, and of female honour, they are not merely unsurpassed, but absolutely unequalled amongst the nations of the earth.

The antagonism between the statements of Mr. Lecky and those of Mr. Froude, who, it should be remembered, are dealing with the same period of Irish history, is so very extraordinary that honesty can hardly be attributed to both writers; we must make a choice. If style, the *oratio vultus animi* of Cicero, is an index of the state of the mind, the judgment will certainly be in favour of Mr. Lecky. Moreover, he is one amongst many grave authorities, while Mr. Froude is the solitary systematic spokesman of that insane and one-eyed monster—popular bigotry. We shall find that all those exalted moral qualities which Mr. Lecky has concentrated in a few paragraphs have been observed in detail, and described by a *catena* of writers reaching back for more than a century—a period which ought to be enough for our argument, and the following

table may help the reader in estimating the value of their evidence :—

ARTHUR YOUNG, F.R.S., <i>Tour in Ireland, 1776-79.</i>	{ Although this writer deals principally with economical questions, the few remarks he makes on the moral condition of the Irish are quoted by all modern writers.
JOHN CARR, <i>The Stranger in Ireland, 1805.</i>	{ In a quarto volume of 530 pages he gives the result of a very careful study of the Irish national manners at a period when Ireland was almost forgotten in the midst of the uproar that followed the French Revolution.
DANIEL DEWAR, <i>Observations on the Character, Customs, and Superstitions of the Irish, 1812.</i>	{ A Scotch traveller, and no admirer of the Catholic Church, which enhances the value of his favourable evidence.
MR. AND MRS. S. C. HALL, <i>Ireland, 1825-40.</i>	{ This work, in three quarto volumes, contains matter collected in five several tours, during a period of fifteen years, and as a monument of prolonged and patient investigation of the manners and customs of the poor, it is probably unapproached in literature.
<i>Memorandums made in Ireland.</i> JOHN FORBES, M.D., F.R.S., Hon. D.C.L., Oxon., &c., 1852.	{ Dr. Forbes was a man of singular intellectual powers, and his work is thoroughly "scientific," in the proper sense of the word.

ARTHUR YOUNG.

Introducing the subject of "manners and customs," he observes (p. 178): "This section would

not have found a place in my observations had not some persons, of much more flippancy than wisdom, given very gross misrepresentations of the Irish nation." He then remarks on the way in which the "conduct of certain classes may have given rise to general and consequently injurious condemnation," and he instances the "little country gentleman," whom he styles the "vermin of the country"; and he concludes (p. 191) with the following character of the nation: "Their talent for eloquence is felt and acknowledged in the parliaments of both nations. Our service both by sea and land, as well as that [unfortunately for us] of the principal monarchies of Europe, speak their steady and determined courage. Every unprejudiced traveller who visits them will be as much pleased by their cheerfulness, as obliged by their hospitality, and will find them a brave, polite, and liberal people."¹

MR. CARR.

This writer begins by observing: "The character which I have attempted to portray is too frank to conceal its own failings," and it must occur to every-

¹ A great advocate of the Irish poor on a memorable occasion has, I think, attached too much importance to some immoral boasts uttered by certain licentious Irish landlords in the presence of Arthur Young (p. 166). Such "vermin," to borrow Young's expression, are prone to exaggerate their obscene domination.

one that this is the explanation of the interest so many people take in the study of Irish character. "In the course of my tour," he continues (p. 52), "through different parts of Ireland, although I was frequently alone, and had no other weapon than a toothpick, I never met the slightest molestation. The principal murders and depredations which are stated to have been committed in Ireland for some time past have been manufactured by the editors of English newspapers to fill up a vacancy in their prints. Upon these occasions Limerick and its neighbourhood are generally selected for the scene of blood and outrage. The arrival of the mail frequently astonishes some of the inhabitants with an account of their own throats having been cut, their cattle houghed, and their houses plundered." Of the character of "low Irish," as he styles them, he writes: "His wit and warmth of heart are his own, his errors and their consequences will not be registered against *him*. I speak of him in a quiescent state, and not when suffering and ignorance led him into scenes of tumult which inflamed his mind and blood to deeds that are foreign to his nature. We know that the best when corrupted become the worst." At pp. 265, 292, 405 he pays the usual enthusiastic homage to what he styles the "inviolate sanctity of Irish purity." He admired "the urbanity of the

people," and says: "I have frequently seen two boors take off their hats and salute each other with great civility." His remarks are a striking corollary to those of Mr. Lecky on the subject of revolts in Ireland. "I believe," says Mr. Carr, "that the low Irish are no more naturally prone to rebellion than the ladies are to the forgery of franks. History makes honourable mention of their love of justice and their submission to the laws. Baron Finglas, in the days of Henry VIII., thus spoke of the Irish: 'The laws and statutes made by the Irish on their hills, they keep firm and stable, without breaking them for any favour or reward.'—(Baron Finglas's *Breviate of Ireland*.) Sir John Davies (Attorney-General in the reign of James I.), too, acknowledges, 'that there is no nation under the sun that love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish, or will rest better satisfied with execution thereof, although it be against themselves.'—(Davies's *History of Ireland*.) Coke also says: 'For I have been informed by many of them that have had judicial places there [Ireland] and partly of my own knowledge, that there is no nation of the Christian world that are greater lovers of justice than they are; which virtue must of necessity be accompanied by many others.'"—(Coke's *Institutes*, chap. lxxvi.) Carr, p. 289.

MR. DEWAR.

Mr. Dewar, after the manner of Mr. Carr, went down into the depths of Irish life. With Mr. Baron Fletcher, in his famous address to the Grand Jury of Wexford in 1814, and Gustave de Beaumont in 1835, he points out (p. 22) that as a rule it is impossible to obtain correct information about the "aborigines" from the Anglo-Hibernian in Ireland. "He heartily hates their language, their customs, &c. . . . Possessed of this violent antipathy, he is little qualified to receive accurate information, or to entertain a just opinion respecting them; and accordingly, while he thinks he perfectly understands their character, he is really much more ignorant for the most part on this head than the intelligent, the candid, and the unbiassed traveller."

At p. 37 he defends the Irish against the charge of deceit, and very pertinently observes: "The truth is, the people of Ireland [I mean the aborigines] have for many centuries been placed in peculiar circumstances: they have been often deceived, often insulted, and often ridiculed. It was natural for them, therefore, to be rather jealous, not to be too ready to place confidence in strangers," &c.; and he sums up as follows: "The Irishman, as well as the Highlander, possesses, with some limitations, 'the generous and chivalrous spirit, the

self-subdued mind, the warm affection to his family—the fond attachment to his clan—the love of story and of song—the contempt of danger and of luxury—the mystic superstition equally awful and tender.' . . . Campion, with all the prejudices of an Englishman of the sixteenth century, confirms this view of the Irish character, if indeed any confirmation be necessary on a point so obvious though not generally understood: 'The people are thus inclined: religious, frank, amorous, ireful, sufferable of pains infinite, very glorious, delighted with wars, great alms-givers, passing in hospitality. The same, being virtuously bred up or reformed, are such mirrors of holiness and austerity that other nations retain but a shadow or show of devotion in comparison of them.'—(Campion's *History of Ireland*, p. 19); Dewar, p. 49.

MR. AND MRS. S. C. HALL.

Anything even approaching an analysis of this truly extraordinary work in an essay is out of the question. The writers remark that "nowhere is human nature so infinitely varied"¹ as in Ireland, and the proofs of this assertion are found in their work of more than fourteen hundred quarto pages. And yet throughout they are dealing with the poor

¹ Vol. iii. p. 392.

and the illiterate—with a people who, as far as external circumstances go, have been for centuries, and are now, reduced nearer to the miseries of savage life than any nation in the civilised world past or present—this is the strange ground which they have found strewn with spiritual flowers. There have been many searching investigations into Irish life and character; but if all the reports of commissions, too often impregnated with sectarian and party fury, were put in the balance against the work now under consideration, they would kick the beam. From the first page to the last, embracing as it does the laborious investigations of fifteen years, in thirty-two counties of Ireland, this work is one long chain of evidence in illustration and confirmation of that beautiful and exalted character which, as we have seen, the unenthusiastic Mr. Lecky attributes to the Catholic peasant of Ireland.

For simple records of heroic self-sacrifice and charity see vol. i. pp. 167, 170, 177, 268, 360; vol. ii. pp. 324, 329, 381 (n.); vol. iii. pp. 45, 182 (n.), 329 (n.), 354 (n.), 356 (n.), 477. With these proofs of the royal virtue which is “strong as death” are intertwined the evidences—

“Uttered not, yet comprehended,”

of that beautiful virtue which, in domestic life, is ever the bride and mother of heroic and constant

love : evidence which (vol. ii. p. 314) is thus summed up : "The women of Ireland—from the highest to the lowest—are most faithful, most devoted, most pure ; the best mothers, the best children, the best wives ;—possessing pre-eminently the beauty and holiness of virtue, in the limited and in the extensive meaning of the phrase" ; and again (vol. iii. p. 292), "men and women of whom it is no exaggeration to say the former are brave to an adage, and the latter virtuous to a proverb."

DR. FORBES.

This writer takes up the theme in the same spirit, and with great clearness and vigour of demonstration. He tells us (vol. i. p. 251, n.) : "I did not bring a single introduction with me into Ireland, my intention and desire being chiefly to communicate with those who require no such passport to their presence—the lower and the middleclass of persons—cottiers, labourers, artisans, farmers, shopkeepers, priests." His evidence (vol. i. pp. 56-81) as to the "unrepining content," "absence of bitterness," and the generosity with which the poor "urged the claims of their yet poorer neighbours," is wonderfully true to life. But perhaps the most striking part of his work is that in which (ii. p. 244) he gives a table showing the proportion of illegiti-

mate to legitimate children in the workhouses of Ireland, England and Wales, as follows:—

	Illegitimate.		Legitimate.
Ireland . . .	1	to	16·47
England . . .	1	to	1·49
Wales . . .	1	to	0·87
England and Wales	1	to	1·46

Moreover, he goes on to show in the next page that the proportion of illegitimate children coincides “almost exactly with the relative proportion of the two religions in each province, being large where the Protestant element is large, and small where it is small. Thus, in Connaught, where the proportion of Protestants to Catholics is only as 1 to 6·45, the proportion of illegitimate children to legitimate is only as 1 to 23·53; while in Ulster, where the proportion of Protestants to Catholics is as 1·42 to 1·00, the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate is as 1 to 7·26.”¹

The Scottish solidity of Dr. Forbes’ work was probably the secret of the extraordinary effect it produced at a very critical period. In 1853 the

¹ A fact which has escaped Dr. Forbes increases the honourable balance in favour of Ireland. It is well known that dishonoured women and their wretched offspring in Catholic Ireland have no home save the workhouse; while in Protestant communities the “love child,” whose title is a sad revelation of moral decay, and its mother more easily escape unobserved. Baptismal registeries would probably show a still larger proportion of legitimate children in Ireland.

religion of Ireland was on its trial on the occasion of the infamous Nunneries Bill of Mr. Chambers ; and I well remember the profound sensation when a "Fellow of the Royal Society," "One of Her Majesty's Physicians," informed his English and Scotch friends (vol. ii. p. 81), that it was his deliberate opinion that the superior morality of Ireland was chiefly owing to the practice of Confession, and that the Irish nuns, "though looking cheerful, as busy people generally are, had something in their bearing which inspired at once reverence and awe" ; people of whom "it may be truly said, that they accept and follow to the letter the precepts and the practice of the great Founder of the Christian religion" (vol. i. p. 14 ; ii. p. 27). It is certainly remarkable that for the last hundred years it seems easier to Scotchmen than to Englishmen to do justice to Ireland. Perhaps it arises from the fact that they have not been so long her hereditary foes. Anyhow it is a suggestive subject for reflection when we find such men as Sir John Moore, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, and General Gordon imbued with an almost passionate sympathy for the Catholic poor of Ireland.

III.

As far as I know since Dr. Forbes there has been very little serious writing about Irish social

and domestic life. We have had, indeed, some shallow and flippant productions like that of M. le Baron Mandat-Grancey, with views of Ireland taken in smoking-rooms, or from the dusty windows of Dublin Castle, which are in deplorable contrast to the writings of the earnest and conscientious men which we have been considering. Unfortunately the dress of drawing-room political philosophy with which such writers invest their frivolities seems to impress some people. They remind us of those *Philosophes* of whom Edmund Burke observes, that they regard a whole generation of human beings as little as if they were so many mice in an air-pump. Society in our days has no more dangerous enemies than facetious moralists, who are merry when they ought to be serious in the august presence of sacred misery.

The French writer, indeed, has some redeeming features. He is not entirely destitute of the chivalry of his ancestors, and although he amuses himself over the agonies of a nation to which France owes so much, he is unsparing in his denunciations of the causes. Moreover, he bears witness as late as 1887 to that marvellous purity of Irish morals, "*qui partout ailleurs sembleraient fabuleuses et qui cependant sont confirmées par des documents officiels*"; and he exclaims: "*Vraiment, plus on fréquente ces braves Irlandais, plus on s'attache à eux.*"

He then goes on to say (p. 252) "they have hardly more than two faults: they are very lazy and horrible liars." This writer will do as well as any other in bringing us face to face with the two radical faults which are supposed to vitiate all that is good in the Irish character. As a foreigner, without political or personal bias, M. de Mandat-Grancey is not inclined to take intermittent epidemics of crime as an index of the moral character of a people; whereas, sloth and falsehood are part of a man's nature and, so to speak, in his blood.

In answer to the charge that the Irish are hopelessly lazy, and the aspirations of those who "look forward—many with hope, some with confidence—to the complete or partial extermination of the race from the soil of Ireland as the only sure means of restoring that country to its just level in the scale of national welfare and happiness," Dr. Forbes contents himself (vol. ii. p. 366) with some trenchant quotations from Kay's *Social Condition of the People*, and Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*, the substance of which is that the Irish are never guilty of doing nothing, except when they have nothing to do; for with all their buoyancy they cannot get over the difficulty of the poet, that—

"Work, without hope, draws nectar in a sieve;
And hope, without an object, cannot live."

The fact is, that whenever he has an object, in

peace or in war, the Irishman has to be held in : his fault is, either that of doing too much, or doing the work of others as well as his own, and the latter failing is not always a moral fault.

And now for the subject of lying, to borrow the laconic introduction of Cardinal Newman in his answer to Mr. Kingsley. If, as it is the fashion to say, the Irish are radically false, then it is well-nigh impossible that they can possess those pure and generous virtues which are attributed to them : "No vice," says Lord Bacon, "doth so cover a man with shame as to be false and perfidious"; for, he adds in the words of Montaigne : "If it be well-weighed, to say that a man lieth is as much as to say that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men."¹ Now, as far as their religion is concerned, this falsehood can hardly be attributed to the Irish. "The Catholic does not respect an oath," says Sydney Smith. "Why not? What upon earth has kept him out of Parliament, or excluded him from all the offices whence he is excluded, but his respect for oaths? There is no law which prohibits a Catholic to sit in Parliament. There could be no such law, because it is impossible to find out what passes in the interior of any man's mind."²

¹ Essay on Truth.

² *Works*, iii. p. 69. Longmans, 1848.

Bacon thus begins his essay on Truth: "*What is truth?*" said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer," and we may add it is a pity that so many inherit the frivolity of Pilate. Truth and courage in theory and in practice are such very different things that what is heroic self-sacrifice in one man is mere selfish best policy in another. The whole force of the accusation against the "perfidious" Irish lies in pharisaical forgetfulness of this distinction. Who is it that are held up to the scorn of the world as images of Irish perfidy? Hungry mendicants in the pages of M. de Mandat-Grancey, whose living, like that of the lawyers, depends on the dexterous management of their case; or simple and bewildered witnesses before judges, whom, rightly or wrongly, they regard as their hereditary enemies. I do not excuse falsehood even under the sorest temptations, but I refrain from casting the stone until I have been tried, and found faithful in similar circumstances.

No work on Ireland in our times has been so well received in England as Mr. Trench's *Realities of Irish Life*. I do not mean to say that it merits all the encomiums showered on it by English reviewers. The great "Reality" is hidden from Mr. Trench, and finds no place in his pages. He seems to have no perception of the influence of religion on the Irish people—that religion which Mr. Lecky,

a more profound observer, recognises as "the one thing that they valued more than their land": "the passion and consolation of their lives."¹ In this respect, therefore, of all others the most important, Mr. Trench was a stranger to the people. Moreover, he was the agent and powerful representative of the landlord class, whom they regarded as their hereditary antagonists, and himself a very determined executor of their laws. And yet, in widely-distant parts of the country, he succeeded in winning an amount of confidence which probably no people in the world would have granted under similar circumstances. If this confidence is creditable to Mr. Trench, it is equally so to those with whom he had to deal: the chain of honour and fidelity must have been fixed at both ends.

The following are some specimens of the way in which this work was greeted: "We know of nothing which conveys so forcible and impressive a description of this extraordinary people."—(*Edinburgh Review*.) "We shall be much mistaken if it does not go far to enable us both to understand the Irish better and to sympathise with them far more discriminatingly than we have ever done before."—(*Quarterly Review*.) "It is easy to say that his sketches of Irish life are highly coloured . . . but none the less on that account may they

¹ *History of England*, vol. ii. pp. 18, 124.

be very true to nature.”—(*The Times*.) “Many a tale of Irish generosity, devotion and heroism is here recorded in the substantive form of fact.”—(*St. James's Chronicle*.)¹

We have here the work of an Irish Protestant agent who, as he says, has lived amongst the people “from youth to manhood, and from manhood to verge of age,” but no reader of this book can truly say that it is a picture of a false and treacherous people. We have, indeed, much of what he styles “poetic turbulence, and almost romantic violence,” but apart from those terrible conjunctures, wherein all moral principles are submerged, its evidence is altogether in support of the opinion of Mr. Trench’s reviewer in the *Standard*, “that it is a revelation of true tenderness, of pathos, of generous loving devotion, and of daring courage, such as few nations can equal”: virtues which never yet have been found in false and treacherous hearts.

The truth is, Mr. Trench’s *Realities of Irish Life* is a running commentary on Mr. Carr’s words, already quoted, that the Irish character is “too frank to conceal its own failings.” In spite of their acuteness, the Irish are, of all nations, least

¹The thirteen pages of opinions of the press, appended to the New Edition, is a very curious revelation of the complex emotions which books about Ireland, with any sort of stamp of sincerity, arouse in England.

fit for "treasons, stratagems, and spoils." No one has discussed this subject with such judicial impartiality as Dr. Forbes. Certain incidents, he tells us, "impressed me strongly, as indicating the singular candour and honesty of the lower classes of the Irish. I may be mistaken, but my experience leads me to believe that instances of such spontaneous, unselfish, and certainly unnecessary exposition of personal character and personal failure could hardly be found in either England or Scotland"; and he goes on to defend the Irish against the accusation of "want of truthfulness in speech" as compared with "their half-brothers, the English and Scotch." He admits that he has "often heard Irishmen say the thing that was not, oftener certainly than I have heard Englishmen or Scotchmen say it," and he suggests the following explanation, which will recommend itself to everyone who has an intimate acquaintance with the Irish character:—

"An Irishman's slips are more the sudden expression of emotional feeling than lies—bounces, white lies, at most: they spring from the same intellectual source as his wit, his bulls, and his fun, and have a close alliance with the quick geniality and kindness of his heart. His impulsive nature makes him speak before he has had time to think, and hence he often speaks wrong: his eager desire

to oblige, to assent, to favour, overpowers for the moment his perception or recollection of all opposing facts, and hence he often says *yes* when he should say *no*, or *no* when he should say *yes*.”¹

To this we ought also to add those daring liberties which untutored Irish eloquence takes with the English language, which are sometimes as incomprehensible as those of Mr. Carlyle. So far from being sly and secret, communicativeness is peculiarly strong in the “mere” Irish, and their imperfect vocabulary is made to do duty at all costs. It is his knowledge of the English language which is often at fault, rather than his veracity, when an uneducated Irishman gives an incorrect answer. This is evident from the fact that they are often most incomprehensible when it is most their interest to tell the truth; and the puzzle increases when the same person, who goes round about in a circle at a simple question, will tell a story, or carry on an argument, and never seem to want the right word. This intellectual condition, however, is not without a parallel amongst the best educated persons. An English ecclesiastic, for instance, whose knowledge of French has been derived entirely from religious books may get on very well with a French sermon; but put him in a French witness-box, and he will be as bewildered

¹ Vol. i. pp. 24, 120, 236.

and contradictory as any Connemara peasant, who knows just "enough of English to save him from being *hung before his face*." ¹

Our subject is certainly a serious one, and yet it has its ludicrous aspect. From Dean Swift to Sydney Smith, Ireland has inspired the most powerful satirists in the language, and it is English Protestants, not Irish Catholics, who are the objects of their immortal castigations. The fact that for centuries past Protestant ministers have been, of all men in the empire, the most indignant denouncers of the falsehood and hypocrisy of their co-religionists is certainly a remarkable phenomenon. The two famous dignitaries named have not been the only generous defenders of Catholic Ireland in the ranks of the Establishment. The list would be a long one were I to enumerate the honoured names of Protestant clergymen, past and present, who, by their fearless utterances, have displayed the spirit of chivalry on the controversial battle-field. There is hardly a falsehood or an impudent assumption about Catholic Ireland which is not found strangled somewhere in the pages of Sydney Smith. As we have seen, in answer to the accusation that Catholics disregard their oaths, he points out to unreasoning readers that it was precisely because they would

¹ A proverbial Irish expression, quoted by Gerald Griffin. *The Collegians*, p. 331.

not perjure themselves that they wasted away under the penal laws, and he summarily dismisses the objection that "Catholic morality is not good" with the answer, "It is not true." With equal brevity he disposes of the practice of burning spurious bibles, and the violence of men for whom death has no terrors because life has no consolations.¹

But to return to Mr. Trench. His picture of Irish domestic life is well summed up in the words of one of his reviewers as a revelation of "the purity, the tenderness, the trustfulness, the innate courtesy, the combined sadness and sprightliness of the Celtic temperament"; and yet it falls short of that which is found in the pages of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall. It is his treatment of the dark and terrible mysteries of Irish life which has given such a singular importance to his work. In dealing with these questions his peculiar position secured him a patient hearing, which would have been denied to others. Indeed, were it not for his antecedents and character, it might almost be said of his *Realities of Irish Life* that, like certain poems and romances, it invests criminals with a sort of heroic grace. But when this man moralises and speculates on the causes of agrarian murder in Ireland he is in his right, for few men living had so often faced the stern

¹ *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 238, 261.

reality; and when, at the conclusion of his book, with facts before the reader, he pleads extenuating circumstances, he is in no danger of being accused of political bias, or lax principles, and we feel that the generosity of his acknowledgments, were they more general, would be the very best antidote to the evils which he condemns.

He begins (p. 5) by declaring it to be his own experience that whenever, in Ireland, justice had been carried to its "legitimate conclusions," he had "never yet known it to fail." Again (p. 329): "Steady justice and persevering determination, combined with kind and liberal treatment, will ever in much-abused Ireland produce the most satisfactory results." And then he proceeds to congratulate "Lord Digby, and those who worked under him," on having "obtained a moral victory over what at one time appeared as dangerous and unpromising a subject as any Irish landlord or Irish agent could possibly undertake to manage." Lastly (p. 357), he gives us what he himself calls his "Conclusion," in which we find the following declaration, the truth of which will hardly be questioned whatever opinions some people may entertain of its prudence:—

"We can scarcely shut our eyes to the fact that the circumstances and feelings which have led to the terrible crime of murder in Ireland are usually very different from those which have led to murder

elsewhere. The reader of the English newspaper is shocked at the list of children murdered by professional assassins, of wives murdered by their husbands, of men murdered for their gold. In Ireland that dreadful crime may almost invariably be traced to a wild feeling of revenge for the national wrongs to which so many of her sons believe that she has been subjected for centuries.

“The cry of Ireland is invariably for ‘*justice*.’”

The italics are Mr. Trench's own. I have no wish to put a strained interpretation on his words, but certainly, his language is that of a man who believes that “justice, carried to its legitimate conclusions,” and “kind and liberal treatment” on the part of his own order, is not the rule in Ireland. If this be true, it must be acknowledged that the Irish peasantry have had peculiar temptations, and that circumstances have largely contributed to keep alive that “wild feeling of revenge” which Mr. Trench deplures. Now it is a consolation to think that circumstances are accidents, and not part of a nation's life, and that with their disappearance the heart of the people may still be found unchanged. With the exception of crimes perpetrated in the name of religion, there are none more fearful than those which spring from private interpretation of justice, for when each man is a law to himself the whole fabric of society begins to totter; but in neither of these cases is man so

irreclaimable as when he is sunk in personal moral depravity.

Morality is one of the few points on which men of our age that "count it a bondage to fix a belief"¹ are pretty well agreed.² "The test of civilisation [says Emerson] is not the census, nor the size of cities, nor the crops—no; but the kind of men the country turns out." And he concludes, "Civilisation depends on morality."³ But morality has its root in the family. It begins at home, in that sweet kingdom which man indeed protects, but over which woman is sovereign; and it is in this sacred province, of all others most dear to man, that poor and despised Ireland challenges the proud civilisation of the nineteenth century. If this point alone is gained, her cause is won.

Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the challenge comes, not from herself, but from the astonished stranger; for virtue, like health of body, is unobserved until it is revealed by contrast. I have given some specimens, and they might be

¹ "Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief—affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting." (Lord Bacon, *Essay on Truth*.)

² Morality without religion is only a kind of dead-reckoning—an endeavour to find our place on a cloudy sea by measuring the distance we have run, without any observation of the heavenly bodies. (Longfellow, *Prose Works*, p. 503.)

³ *Works*, iii. p. 10.

immeasurably multiplied, of the enthusiastic admiration and affection which intimate acquaintance with the Irish poor arouses in people almost as far removed from them in the social scale, as in politics and religion. What then is the common ground on which such opposite characters meet?—for some such ground there must be. I believe it is to be found in that natural appreciation of the beauty of domestic life and conjugal fidelity to which all men do homage. This is the level on which rich and poor, the prince and the peasant, meet, for in the sacredness of their homes is the measure of their relative honour, dignity and happiness.

As I have already observed, the praises of Ireland in this respect must be sung by the stranger ; and I know no one who has done so in loftier strains than an English official, Sir Francis Head. This is all the more remarkable as his book reveals that he was possessed by an almost fanatical detestation of the Catholic religion.¹

I believe the lawyers say that children are the best witnesses, and they are the first whom this writer summons. He watches the boys in school and at their play, and is charmed by their spirit of

¹ *A Fortnight in Ireland.* Sir Francis Head had served in the Army, and as Governor of Canada, and had evidently studied men and manners on a very wide scale ; and (p. 147), like Dr. Forbes, he is filled with admiration at “the meekness and resignation” with which the Irish Catholic poor bear misfortune and affliction.

discipline, good humour, and courtesy with each other. Of the girls he observes (p. 34): "In no country in the world have I ever witnessed, have I ever beheld, the indescribable native modesty which, in their playground as well as in their studies, characterised their countenances."

Again (p. 226) he returns to the subject: "From the morning on which I had visited the great Model National School in Marlborough Street, Dublin, to the hour of my arrival in Galway, I have remarked in the Irish female countenance an innate or native modesty more clearly legible than it has ever been my fortune to read in journeying through any other country on the globe. . . . Wherever I went I made inquiries, the result of which was not only to confirm, but to over-confirm, my own observation. Indeed, from the Resident Commissioner of the Board of National Education in the metropolis, down to the governors of gaols and masters of the remotest workhouses, I received statements of the chastity of the Irish women so extraordinary that, I must confess, I could not believe them; in truth, I was infinitely more puzzled by what I heard than by the simple evidence of my own eyes."¹

¹ Here follows a mass of confirmatory evidence furnished by the police, Sir Francis Head having obtained what he styles (p. 109) a "firman" from the Chief Constabulary Office in Dublin directing

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the works I have been quoting is the way in which the language of poetry is ever breaking out, under the most unlikely circumstances, in the presence of the “innate and native modesty” of Ireland—that beauty which is no mere surface-painting, but comes from within, like the blush upon the rose. Mr. Lecky has well said that “the world is governed by its ideals”; and his reflections on this subject are so much akin to my argument that I cannot refrain from introducing the passage:—

“The world is governed by its ideals; and seldom or never has there been one which has exercised a more profound, or on the whole a more salutary influence, than the mediæval conception of the Virgin. For the first time woman was elevated to her rightful position, and the sanctity of weakness was recognised, as well as the sanctity of sorrow. No longer the slave or toy of man—no longer associated only with ideas of degradation and of sensuality—woman rose, in the person of the Virgin Mother, into a new sphere, and became the object of a reverential homage of which antiquity had no conception. Love was idealised. The

the force to “afford him all possible information.” It would be easy to supplement this evidence. It is certain that in many, probably in the majority of the towns in Ireland, there are no houses of ill-fame.

moral charm and beauty of female excellence was, for the first time, felt. A new type of character was called into being : a new kind of admiration was fostered. Into a harsh and ignorant and benighted age this ideal type infused a conception of gentleness and of purity unknown to the proudest civilisations of the past. In the pages of loving tenderness which many a monkish writer has left in honour of his celestial patron ; in the millions who, in many lands and in many ages, have sought, with no barren desire, to mould their characters into her image ; in those holy maidens who, for the love of Mary, have separated themselves from all the glories and pleasures of the world, to seek in fastings and vigils and humble charity to render themselves worthy of her benediction ; in the new sense of honour, in the chivalrous respect, in the softening of manners, in the refinement of tastes displayed in all the walks of society : in these, and many other ways, we detect its influence. All that was best in Europe clustered round it, and it is the origin of many of the purest elements of our civilisation.”¹

There are many now who look mournfully into the past, and imagine that it can never return, and to such this study of Irish life may possibly be an encouragement. It cannot be said that the morality

¹ *History of Rationalism in Europe*, i. 234.

of the poor in Ireland is an accident or the result of artificial seclusion and security from trial. For centuries past an immense military force has been in perpetual occupation—a state of things of all others the most dangerous to morality; while wealth and power and the administration of the laws have been in the hands of a class who were certainly no better than men of pleasure and men of the world in other countries.

The evidences of St. Patrick's success in the Age of Faith are not likely to be questioned; but the object of this essay is to show that the living Church in Ireland is the heir of the past. If I have proved that poverty in Ireland has neither broken the spirit, nor lowered the moral standard of her people, the mystery is one which is well worthy of attention. If it points to the fact that the Catholic religion possesses the secret of drawing blessings from adversity, this characteristic is one which ought to excite the interest of mankind. Neither in the past nor in the present has philosophy done much in this line; and whatever its legacies may be to its favoured and opulent votaries, it is very certain that it has never been of any help to the poor. Indeed, so patent have been its failures that it has now taken to the less laborious occupation of prophecy, foretelling an age when knowledge will put an end to adversity. In the meantime it leaves

“suffering, sad humanity” to take care of itself—an office which at present it seems very badly prepared to exercise. Christianity has given men lessons which, when separated from its system, only serve to give an apparent religious sanction to the genius of destruction. It has brought the glorious tidings of equality to the poor; but the truth that all men are equal before God demands eternity for its development. If narrowed and restricted to this little overcrowded world, where men, says St. Augustine, like fishes devour one another, it only intensifies the suicidal struggle. The world is threatened with suffocation, like that of Dante’s second circle of hell—

“Which a lesser space
Embracing, so much more of grief contains,”

unless religion can lift men’s hearts to that boundless empyrean where there is room for all.

They have the best right to indulge in bright anticipations for the future who can find instruction and consolation in the past. That which the Catholic Church has done already she aspires to do again. The world was old under Nero and Commodus, and she gave it that new life which has lasted until now. There is nothing in the nature of things to prevent the turning of the tide of a disappointed civilisation: if one man can be disabused and converted, why not a million? Christians may well lift up their

heads when they find men like M. Rénan aghast at what he calls the "constant bankruptcy of Liberalism," and anticipating the possible extinction of unbelief.

Atheism never was, and never will be, the vice of the poor. Lord Bacon enumerates four causes of atheism—Divisions in religion, scandal of priests, scoffing in holy matters, and lastly, "learned times, especially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversity do more bow men's minds to religion."¹ If the infidel objected that by this argument he made religion a mere accident, Lord Bacon would probably answer that in all things man is the creature of accidents, only then he would look upon them as servants of that—

"Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

It was an accident that the times were learned and that peace and prosperity reigned under Augustus, and because these things were accidents and not substantial they had an end, and when this came to pass society was renewed from the roots. Not that it is necessary to suppose that there is any inherent promise of life in the mutable and childish multitude save the one, viz., that it is intellectually young, and therefore it may submit to be taught.

As we have already seen (p. 152 n.), Burke re-

¹ Essay on Atheism.

garded the Catholic Church in Ireland as an instrument not only for the "glory of religion," but for the "good of the State"; and Mr. Lecky has borne witness to the work which she effected in the last century, in the face of difficulties as great as any moral power has ever had to face. In 1798 she stifled Jacobinism, with the loss of her most powerful friends in England as well as Ireland, who with Pitt and Fox inclined to the opinion that it was merely the excess of that which was good. In 1848 she averted the Revolution, and now, alone amongst the rulers of men, she comes forth victorious from her conflict with secret societies. The only thing she has not done is to teach her children how to make money; but in this school there is no lack of instructors. If she can teach the poor something better, and inspire them with the spirit of moderation, then it is possible that Ireland may be again, as she once was, "The Light of the West." Slowly but irresistibly the popular tide is rising, and the masses are becoming the masters of the few, and, unless they learn self-restraint, it is plain that Christian society must perish, and—

. . . "appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And last eat up himself."¹

¹ *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3.

All virtues, like the kingdom of heaven, suffer violence, and men set a high price on things which they have purchased with tears and blood. This is the promise of perseverance in ancient ways, which attaches to Ireland above all the nations of the earth. For three hundred years she has been proof against that spirit of religious anarchy which has been the parent of political licence. "Alone amongst the northern nations," says Lord Macaulay, "Ireland adhered to the ancient faith," and now she sees the end of the promises of universal Revolution and the terrible collapse of those who have drunk their fill of the cup of the Enchantress. "You and I," wrote Burke to Bishop Hussey, "hate Jacobinism as we hate the gates of hell. Why? Because it is a system of oppression." The letter in which these words occur reads like his dying testament to the Irish people, whose needs and dangers he understood better than any statesman before or since, and there is such marvellous unity in his style that each sentence seems to have in it the life of the whole. He warns Catholics against that "Jacobinism which arises from penury and irritation, from scorned loyalty and rejected allegiance," and continues:—

"This radical evil may baffle the attempts of heads much wiser than those who, in the petulance and riot of their drunken power, are neither ashamed nor afraid to insult and provoke those

whom it is their duty, and ought to be their glory, to cherish and protect. . . . But all is for the Protestant cause. . . . If the country enjoys a momentary quiet, it is pleaded as an argument in favour of the good effect of wholesome rigours. If, on the contrary, the country grows more discontented, and if riots and disorders multiply, new arguments are furnished for giving a vigorous support to the authority of the directory on account of the rebellious disposition of the people. So long, therefore, as disorders in the country become pretexts for adding to the power and emoluments of a *junto*, means will be found to keep one part of it or other in a perpetual state of confusion and disorder."

And his conclusion is that "the State has, if possible, greater interest in acting according to strict law than even the subject himself. For, if the people see that the law is violated to crush them, they will certainly despise the law. They, or their party, will be easily led to violate it whenever they can by all the means in their power. Except in cases of direct war, whenever government abandons law it proclaims anarchy."¹

When the dispassionate reader recalls those awful words of Mr. Lecky, that in Ireland "illegal violence was the natural protection against immoral laws," and sets them side by side with those of

¹ Burke's *Correspondence*, vol. iv. pp. 380, 383, 393.

Burke, he will hardly deny that the Irish Catholic has been sorely tempted to rebellion. And yet, if chivalrous and generous prodigality of blood is an evidence of loyalty, the Irish Catholic need not fear comparison with his Protestant English fellow-subject. This was the verdict of the Duke of Wellington in one of his speeches on Catholic emancipation. "It is mainly," he said, "to the Irish Catholics that we all owe our proud pre-eminence in our military career," and he spurned as an insult to himself the attempt to brand them with the imputation of a divided allegiance.¹

¹ H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence (William IV.) gives evidence for the navy in the House of Lords. "During all his professional experience he could bear testimony to the character, to the energy to the honesty, and to the thorough good humour of Irishmen. If the venerable Duncan . . . if Lord St. Vincent . . . if the great Nelson, the hero of the Nile, were in being—would they not hold up their hands in admiration that the dawn of peace and happiness and tranquillity in Ireland had arrived—that justice was about at length to be done to the country of those men who had been fighting the battles of the Empire on the lower decks of the ships which they commanded"; and he reminds the Duke of Wellington, the premier, that "he was a soldier, and when he bore in mind the regiments that fought under his command, he must consider that he was only discharging a debt of gratitude which he owed to those gallant men who had enabled him to achieve his victories, and had contributed to raise him to his present exalted situation."—(*Hansard*, 23rd February, 1829.) I cannot find the contemporary report of the Duke of Wellington's speech. It is quite in keeping, however, with that delivered on the same subject in the Irish House of Commons in 1793, in which he says that "he had no doubt of the loyalty of the Catholics of this country (Ireland), and he trusted, when the question would be brought forward respecting this description of men, that

There is a profound significance in the fact that it is only in the British army and navy that the Irish Catholic possesses perfect equality. The reason is obvious. In the stern school of the battlefield there is no place for the pettifogger and trader in civil discord : men are dispassionate when destruction and death are the penalties of prejudice and folly. What man is there in his senses who supposes that Her Majesty would have a moment's hesitation in entrusting the supreme command of the armies of the Empire to a Catholic fellow-

we would lay aside animosities, and act with moderation and dignity, and not with the fury and violence of partisans."—(Philip's *Life of Curran*, p. 413, quoted from "Debates on Roman Catholic Question.") The duke's gallant companion-in-arms, the Marquis of Anglesey, said : "Nothing is so fallacious as to suppose that the population of Ireland are dissolute and idle. Dissolute ! You may ask for the returns of crime in England and in Ireland, and the contrast will show you which people is the most dissolute. Idle they are, but it is solely because they can get no employment. . . . Suppose this Bill to be passed into law by this day month : declare war if you like the next day, and I assert that you will have no difficulty, within six weeks, to raise in that country fifty thousand able-bodied, and what is more, willing-hearted men, who will traverse the Continent, or find their way to any quarter of the globe to which you may choose to direct their arms. I say, my lords, that the passing of this Bill is worth, to the British Empire, more, far more—and I do not wish to exaggerate—than a hundred thousand bayonets."—(*Hansard*, 3rd April, 1829.) Newenham, *Statistical and Historical Inquiry* (p. 133), as early as 1805, states that "perhaps two-fifths of the present disposable force of His Majesty are Irish Roman Catholics, that they are likely to constitute a much greater proportion, and that 120,000 Catholics of this country lost their lives in fighting for him during the last war alone."

countryman of Wellington, were the genius of the great Captain to reappear in such a quarter?

Death is ever the interpreter and the judge of life. No one knows this better than he whose office it is to minister to departing souls. It is then that all the false tinsel borrowed from the ethics of culture drops off, and man is seen in his true colours. Up to this point I have drawn my proofs of the results of St. Patrick's religion from the stranger. Perhaps now, without impropriety, I may give the results of my own observations, extending over a period of more than thirty years, chiefly spent in the service of the Irish in the hospitals of London. There is a real analogy between the hospital and the battlefield: in both man is in the ranks, side by side with his fellow-man, and the balance is the same for all.

During my prolonged relations with the Protestant physicians and nurses in London hospitals never in word or manner have I observed even a shadow of that supercilious contempt for the Irish Catholic which is only too common amongst those "gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease." On the contrary, experience has convinced me that the Irish patients are generally the favourites in these institutions, and that the affection, and even admiration, which they inspire is always in proportion to the splendour of their faith, and the vitality

of their national traditions. There is ever an infallibly-descending scale in the case of the children and grandchildren of the Irish in England, who are Irish indeed in name, but English in their manners and customs.

Men are looking everywhere for the evidences of Christianity, except in the place to which its Divine Founder has directed their attention, in that answer which He gave to the message of the Baptist, *Pauperes evangelisantur*. His Gospel taught no economical wisdom, gave no instruction in thrift and economy: its object was to lift men's hearts above this world, and to lead them to make little of the things that pass away. When these doctrines were first announced they were very offensive to "sophisters, economists, and calculators"; but they prevailed, and expanded into that spirit of Christian chivalry which, imperfect as it is, is still the one thing which makes this world endurable. Mr. Froude is welcome to say that "the Irish are the spendthrift sister of the Aryan race," an accusation which is re-echoed by the present Chief Minister of Her Majesty. Prodigality of money, as well as of blood, is always more pleasant than parsimony, and at times quite as useful and reasonable, and however much it may cost the giver, the receiver ought certainly to be the last to despise or complain of it.

It is hard to continue to be serious for any

length of time in dealing with English prejudices against the Irish. "I now take a final leave of this subject of Ireland," says Sydney Smith; "the only difficulty in discussing it is a want of resistance—a want of something difficult to unravel, and something dark to illuminate; to agitate such a question, is to beat the air with a club, and cut down gnats with a scimitar." Granted that the Irish care little for money, are they the worse for this? Is there no place now in the Empire for anybody save the stock-jobber and the money-lender; no occupation for "Irish statesmen, scholars, soldiers, artists, lawyers, poets, men of letters," whose merits have aroused the enthusiasm of Mr. Froude himself? Is the taunt of Napoleon come true, that "England is a nation of shopkeepers"?

It is impossible to believe that Mr. Froude and Lord Salisbury are in earnest; and this is at once the most pleasant, and hopeful view to take of the subject. Their contradictory views about Ireland and the Catholic Church spring from the same source. "Yet," continues Mr. Froude, in the next sentence, "there is notwithstanding a fascination about them in their old land, and in the sad and strange associations of their singular destiny. They have a power of attraction, which no one who has felt it can withstand . . . they possess, and have always possessed, some qualities the moral

worth of which it is impossible to over-estimate, and which are rare in the choicest races of mankind."¹

This is a strange confession. Whence comes this fascination and irresistible attraction and this fear, in some, who, as Mr. Froude says, "venture among them," unless it be from that religion which has ever been set for the ruin or resurrection of mankind? What other power has ever been able to clothe the mendicant in the bright panoply of chivalry, like Dante's St. Francis "in the proud Soldan's presence"; or keep alive "even in servitude itself the spirit of an exalted freedom"? If ever, "by the change of the hand of the Most High," the hour of reconciliation comes between Mr. Froude and the religion of Alfred and St. Louis, of Blessed Thomas More and Mary Stuart; he will understand the nature of that "fascination," and "power of attraction," which the children of St. Patrick exercise "in their old land." Even as it is, he can hardly wonder at the feelings of admiration and passionate sympathy for the Irish poor which is as an unconsuming fire in the breasts of those who, in what he truly styles their "singular destiny," behold a revelation of the mystery and beauty of that chivalry of sacrifice which now as ever is the inseparable companion of living Christian faith.

¹ *English in Ireland*, p. 24.

In conclusion, I venture to express the hope that in the preceding pages I have succeeded in carrying the discussion into a religious and œcumenical tribunal wherein national and party fury may submit to be silent, for, if the fountain of St. Patrick's work takes its rise in Ireland, the river of life which flows from it is the inheritance of mankind.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SAINTS AND THE WORLD.

A.D. 492, PATRICK, ARCHBISHOP AND APOSTLE OF THE SCOTS, WENT TO HIS REST ON THE 17th OF MARCH, IN THE 120th YEAR OF HIS AGE; SIXTY YEARS AFTER HIS COMING TO IRELAND TO BAPTISE THE SCOTS.

—Annals of Ulster.

IF the world lasts until the 17th of March, 1892, the spiritual subjects of St. Patrick will keep the fourteenth hundred anniversary of their mysterious Lord and Master. The above is the record of his victorious death as it stands in one of the most ancient of the Annals of Ireland; and there are few men of whom it may be said with equal truth that in death he still lives. It is true, indeed, that, like itself, the soul's operations are immortal, and that every man's works and words have their place in eternity; but it is only the few whose immortality, in any real sense, is manifest in time. Even amongst the dead who are said to

live, there are many who are mere phantoms, and no one will pretend that a mere shadow *Magna nominis umbra* in the distant past, is that continuation of the life and personal influence of man which we call immortality. Influence and immortality, truth and life are one, and, therefore, it is the agents of God alone who are truly immortal ; it is the Saints who never die.

The time is not long gone by since such a statement as this would have had little meaning to any but the devout. When "Modern Thought" was young, it was hopeful and enthusiastic ; but as the nineteenth century approaches its end, it begins to look back on itself and to pass a calm judgment on many of its early illusions, and if some people are driven to despair, there are many who have grown wise. Our victories over inanimate matter are often very questionable, seeing that appetite increases more rapidly than our conquests. Independence and freedom are one and the same thing, and each want engendered by the luxuries of physical science when it becomes a necessity is so much lost of life and liberty. Thus matter, like an untamed beast, devours its keeper, and it may be added that, in certain departments of thought, man's position just now seems quite as perilous. A great many people are waking up to the conviction that the excess of materialistic philosophy is bringing the world back to

the condition of Rome under the Cæsars, when food and pantomimes were the end of life. I need not summon witnesses to prove that the modern world is now very weary of itself: and that all its best and noblest minds are looking wistfully into the past, and longing for the return of many things which were discarded by our immediate forefathers. Even if it were proved that the physical condition of the majority has been improved, and that towns and manufactories are better for man than the country and the simple fruits of the earth, the challenge of the poet remains to be answered.

“If we sided with the eagles, if we struck the stars in rising,
If we wrapped the globe intensely in one hot electric breath,
’Twere but power within our tether, no new spirit power conferring,
And in life we were not greater men, nor braver men in death.”

When a Catholic Priest assails the world, he must bear in mind that he is always regarded as its professional antagonist, and that he has little chance of obtaining a hearing if he depends merely on his own arguments. In vindicating St. Patrick’s work in Ireland, I have thrown myself upon the acknowledgments of our religious antagonists, and I shall take the same line in contrasting the Saint’s immortality with that of his rivals.

It is a significant fact, that while Catholics never falter in their confidence in their principles, the worshippers of physical science seem generally

to grow cold, when to age and experience, is added the quieting influence of competence. The explanation of this is suggested in a remarkable article in one of our most thoughtful periodicals, in which the writer comments on Sir John Lubbock's dictum, that "the true test of the civilisation of a nation must be measured by its progress in science," and, continues, "the present writer, for instance, has lived through all the great discoveries which Sir John Lubbock recounts, . . . but if he knows himself at all, he cannot attribute any measurable fraction of the civilisation which may be in him to the effect—either direct or indirect—of those discoveries on his mind," . . . and concludes, "Socrates was a more truly civilised man than most of those who are now attending the British Association at York, and St. Paul was a far more civilised man, though neither the one nor the other ever heard of spectrum analysis, or the telephone."¹

It is when a calm judgment like the above is set on fire in the pages of the poet that it goes to the head through the heart, which, perhaps, of the two is the most important organ. I must, therefore, crave the readers' patience if, in the following discussion, I seem to make an unusual use of poetic authorities. No one denies their influence, and no one need be ashamed to acknowledge that he

¹ "Sir John Lubbock on Civilisation," *Spectator*, Sept. 3, 1881.

prizes ideals more than matter. The poet leads us to the threshold of the invisible and interminable world, and if he is true to his art, he may become one of God's highest earthly witnesses to the truth that man does not live by bread alone : probably there was more joyous vitality in the one soul of Shakespeare than in those of a dozen worshippers of mammon or pleasure.

The service done by poetry to historical criticism is one of its offices which must become more and more important as the page of history lengthens. Next to religion, human character has always been the poet's noblest theme. In simpler and more heroic ages the poet found his matter, so to speak, at hand and ready-made, whereas, in ours it has to be dug up from the great mine of the past, and separated from foreign and common-place accretions. The discovery of a hero is quite as important a matter as the detection of a new planet, and, while the historical critic, foot-sore and weary, plods on his way, the poet on the wings of inspiration, has already arrived at his destination. Without attempting to make this principle universal, for Dante's historical judgment was led astray by his own political wrongs, it certainly seems that Scott, Moore, and Davis are the most faithful interpreters of the history of their respective countries, while Shakespeare's historical portraits give us an im-

pression of fidelity to the original greater than those of any secular historian, ancient or modern.¹ It is not too much to say that the genius which can run the facts collected from many authorities into the proper mould, will approach nearer to the truth than any one of these authorities standing alone : facts by themselves are sometimes like matter without form.

The test of poetry, applied to characters of flesh and blood pure and simple, is of all others the most severe. If the poet is conscientious and the hero prosaic, there can be no poetry ; while, if the writer introduces his own conceits, he is certain to produce some monstrous composite. Sometimes it happens that the poet forgets the dignity of his hero, as in the case of Lord Tennyson, when, with unpardonable levity, he introduces Rosamund Clifford as a set-off to the austere majesty of St. Thomas of Canterbury. Such liberties, however, are at the poet's own peril ; and if, as in this case, he is really inspired by the personality of an exalted character, the incongruity is suicidal.

¹ The Catholic Catherine of Aragon, in the judgment of Dr. Johnson, is the triumph of the genius of Shakespeare, whilst Henry VIII. is painted as the impersonation of "vulgarity, arrogance, sensuality, cruelty, hypocrisy," &c. (*Hazlitt's Characters of Shakespeare*, p. 167.) It is very remarkable that the picture of "Joan of Arc," which is so unworthy of Shakespeare, is found in a play [1 Henry VI.] which, by the judgment of the best critics, is pronounced to be spurious.

If in every province the poet must be true to nature, in historical subjects his genius is under the further obligation of being true to a pre-existing form which in such subjects is at once the witness and the guide of genius, whose office is to paint from life, and if presumption and "security which is mortal's chiefest enemy" lead to humiliating catastrophes in the natural order, in supernatural regions the falls are still more lamentable. No professor of private judgment in religion has ever given a true picture of a Saint in prose, much less in verse. The voice of mankind bears witness to this; and instinctively they turn to Catholic writers for information concerning those supernatural heroes who have been the makers of the Christian world: no Protestant has ever written a life of a Saint which men care to read a second time. This claim of a monopoly of the Saints must, I fear, offend some of our separated brethren; but, after all surely it is only reasonable? Three hundred years ago Protestantism, in every shape and form, cast out the Saints; and it is, therefore, natural that its pupils should have forgotten what sort of people they are. Their logical, as well as historical, position is that of antagonists: they belong to another world, and they can no more do justice to the spirit of our Saints than we can follow Archdeacon Farrar, and Mr. Froude in their

studies of the interior dispositions of Martin Luther and Henry Tudor.

In spite of the severe strictures of an eminent Review¹ on the "extraordinary exaggeration" of my praise of Aubrey de Vere, my opinion remains unchanged, that he stands unapproached amongst the historical poets of the day. He has brought his genius to bear on secular as well as religious characters, and the ascending scale is in itself a proof that earthly truth and beauty are merely the notes, never quite concordant, of eternal and celestial harmony. It is precisely the same mystery that leads us captive in the *Divina Commedia* of Dante, when from the *Inferno*, alas! so like this world in many ways, he leads us upwards through the *Purgatorio*, peaceful and gentle as the death of the just, into that *Paradiso* wherein we see—

... "in one volume clasp'd of love, whate'er
The universe unfolds."

—*Par.* xxxiii.

I am not assuming to compare De Vere with Dante, or to pass a judgment on the intrinsic merits of his poems. As a rule, the tribunal wherein poets are judged is as slow in its final decisions as that of the Church in her canonisations; but this we can safely

¹ *Saturday Review*, March 17, 1888. I may observe that my reviewer is equally disdainful in his observations on Cardinal Newman's views as to the comparative credibility of miracles attributed to a Catholic Saint, and a Wesleyan minister.

assert, that the spirit of the Irish poet is as pure and as exalted as that of the Italian, and that in the pages of both, this world and its falsehoods, are kept in the same subjection to eternal truth. It is needless to say that this is the distinctive feature of the Christian poet, as contrasted with those whose mission is to flatter, and to make themselves popular by gilding our shame. As long as an austere poet, like Shakespeare, confines himself to natural religion, and does not drive conscience to extremities, he may hope to be popular; but, as soon as he enters the domain of the supernatural world he will most certainly be deserted by those whose heaven goes no higher than that of Mahomet.

In his *Alexander the Great* and *Constantine*, De Vere has introduced two very great earthly figures into his historic portrait-gallery; and, whether he intended it or not, they make a poor appearance in the company of the *Madonna* and the *Saints*. He is faithful to the originals;¹ and it is this fidelity which makes him a witness to the truth, that, not the earth but the skies, and the world that lies beyond, are the native home of genius.

I doubt whether any other poet has set so many *Saints'* lives to music, or distinguished with such exquisite delicacy their various characteristics.

¹ Perhaps he is a little severe on *Constantine*, who, after all, was a convert instructed under difficulties.

In this, three things were requisite—knowledge, love, and faith : the fire would be of little use without the fuel of that faith which is “the evidence of things that appear not.” De Vere’s spirit is concentrated in those lines which Cardinal Newman has placed on the title page of *Callista* :—

“Love thy God and love Him only,
And thy breast will ne’er be lonely.
In that One Great Spirit meet
All things mighty, grave, and sweet.
Vainly strives the soul to mingle
With a being of its kind ;
Vainly hearts with hearts are twined ;
For the deepest still is single.
An impalpable resistance
Holds like natures still at distance.
Mortal : love that Holy One,
Or dwell for aye alone.”

Moreover, like Dante, he has brought to the study of the Saints, that knowledge of Catholic philosophy and theology, without which the Saints are only so many psychological curiosities. Writers thus instructed alone can discern, beneath the outward differences of men, character, and language, that unity in variety in the souls of the Saints, which is a sort of continuation of the Incarnation, and of God manifested in man : without faith and theology we can have neither Christian art nor poetry ; as well might we expect a Madonna di San Sisto from Holman Hunt as a St. Agnes from Tennyson.

If I say that De Vere has done more even than Tillemont to loose St. Patrick from the grave-clothes of lifeless and pedantic criticism, I must appeal to those to whom, like myself, knowledge of St. Patrick has been long sought for and tardily found. In the Saint's own writings, in his *Acta*, and in the *Annals of Ireland*, I was conscious of some great central presence, but until I read De Vere's *St. Patrick*, it was only seen like the shadow of a mountain in the clouds. It does not appear that he intended to write an epic poem. The pieces are detached ; but this makes their unity all the more remarkable, as an evidence of the identity of that one imperial personality which was before the minds of all the ancient biographers of the Saint. It matters not from which of the above named sources De Vere takes his facts, they are informed by the same spirit. Now, as he is rigorously faithful in adherence to his authorities, the unity of his poems is a cogent proof of the unity of his sources. If they were productions of various inventors in ages subsequent to St. Patrick, his poem would inevitably have betrayed its composite origin : it is beyond the power of human genius to make one man out of many.

St. Patrick is the supreme chief of that Celtic Church which has exercised so great an influence on the formation of Christendom, and with his restora-

tion to literature, a new epoch has begun in Celtic historical studies. But another result has followed of even greater importance. What Dante is amongst the poets, St. Patrick is amid the Saints. Outside the pages of Holy Writ there is hardly any such revelation of the sovereignty of the soul over matter as is found in his life, and this is the greatest and the most universal blessing which the life and deeds of man can communicate to his fellows. Some of those who are most jealous of God's interference, are the most cordial in their worship of his image in man, and never is the admiration so genuine and unfettered as when they come to know a Catholic Saint. Contrast for instance Carlyle's deprecating worship of Mahomet and Luther with his language about St. Edmund, King and Martyr, the "heromartyr, and great true son of heaven," when all 'Angle-land,' finding no limits or utterable words for their sense of his worth, they took to beatifying and adoring him. Infinite admiration 'we are taught means worship.' . . . It is the very joy of man's heart to admire when he can; nothing so lifts him from all his mean imprisonments, were it but for moments, as true admiration. . . . In this manner did the men of the Eastern Counties take up the slain body of their Edmund, when it lay cast forth in the village of Hoxne; seek out the severed head, and reverently unite the same. They em-

balmed him with myrrh and sweet spices, with love, pity, and all high and awful thoughts: consecrating him with a daystorm of melodious adoring admiration, and sun-dyed showers of tears;—joyfully yet with awe (as all deep joy has something of the awful in it), commemorating his noble deeds and God-like walk and conversation while on earth.”¹

If it be true that outside the Catholic Church the teachers of the world are now its literary men, it is between them and the Church that the battle of the future must be fought, and the prospect has its bright side. Heresy is essentially illogical, and in consequence it is afraid to accept any Christian argument in its absolute simplicity. Its existence depends upon compromise, and it carries the same spirit into all its discussions, for it can not afford to face either the doctrines of the Church, or the plain facts of her history. On the other hand, secular writers who have no particular position which they are obliged to defend are often as cordial and eloquent as the children of the Church themselves in their expositions of Catholic doctrine, and historic facts. Moreover, they take us at our word, and as we are, instead of the old game of heresy of setting up imaginary ninepins to be knocked over, and this is an inestimable point

¹ *Past and Present*, p. 113.

gained. The question with them at present is, not what the Church is, but whether anything else can be found to do the same work at a less cost ; that is without the cross, and its ideal of absolute sacrifice which in an ever ascending scale is the animating principle of Christianity.

The positions of the contending parties are growing plainer every day. It is no longer a question of the interpretation of the letter of revelation under which so many impostures have sheltered themselves. People now demand to see its spirit manifested in man, and we point to the *Acta Sanctorum* and ask what has the world, past and present, to set against them ? At one time it was the fashion to say that they were mere legends composed for edification's sake, but historical students outside the Church are now of a very different opinion, and they are turning to the lives of the Saints as the one record of the deeds and words of the men and women who in the past built up the great Christian Commonwealth.¹

A hundred years before the conversion of Constantine, Tertullian told the Roman world that the soul of man was naturally Christian. No more

¹ I have been told by one who followed carefully the career of Carlyle, that in his weary and disappointed old age, he might be seen day after day poring over the *Acta Sanctorum* in the London Library.

sublime tribute was ever paid to our common nature, and from that day to this all the noblest minds in the world, outside the Church as well as within it, have borne witness to its truth. "The soul," he writes, "came before the letter; speech before the book; the thought before writing, and man before the philosopher and the poet. . . . The soul did not fall from heaven only for the Latins and the Greeks. There is but one man in all nations, one soul with various voices, one spirit and various harmonies, to each nation its language, but the matter of the language is the same. . . . You taste the doctrine of Christ, and you persecute the Christian."¹

The "one man" and the "one soul with various voices" is repeated in all ages, and the fierce challenges of the great African Doctor are like those of Carlyle, with this difference, that in his orthodox days Tertullian knew his foe and faced him, whereas all his life Carlyle seems never to have been able to distinguish enemies from friends. I know that this extraordinary writer has lost his following, and is now in disgrace. It could not be otherwise; but for all that he is none the less worthy of our attention as one of the ablest and most candid antagonists of the Ancient Faith. There are some who, with reason, count him to be the greatest of the pro-

¹ *De Testimonio Animæ*, c. v. and iv.

fessedly illogical and anti-scholastic philosophers of the century ; and as assertion in place of reasoning is the essential characteristic of this school, there is a great deal to be said for the verdict of his admirers. At anyrate he has one intellectual virtue which distinguishes him from the many philosophical inventors of the day. His Celtic sense of the ludicrous has saved him from the cool assurance of those who plunge into the Unseen as if it were their native element, and from the folly of others who deny it altogether.¹ He was too proud to be conceited. It was no exaggeration on the part of Mr. Ruskin when he observed : "What can you say of Carlyle, but that he was born in the clouds and struck by lightning?"² All men are born in the clouds, and all the proud are struck by the avenger ; but it is only the fallen angels of literature, like Byron and Carlyle, who reveal the meaning of that fall, and the terrific character of the vengeance.

God forbid that there should be anything like triumph in the heart of the Christian when sounding the misery of such spirits, who in their fierce anguish turn round upon us as if the security and exultation of faith were an outrage to the despair-

¹ "I have no affection for free-thinkers : they are no better than fools who bid defiance to the unknown." (*Aphorisms of Napoleon I.*)

² *Life of Carlyle*, by J. A. Froude, ii. 286.

ing, something that we ought in charity to conceal. There is a kindred between genius and sanctity which makes their fall all the more pathetic. It is in the acknowledgments of such minds in their better moments that we read the truth that the soul is naturally Christian, and few amongst them have done this with more simple-hearted earnestness than Carlyle. It is hardly likely that he drew his inspiration from the Roman Breviary in which St. Edmund is invoked as having conquered the enemy by dying, but this is the very idea which he draws out in his strange way. "Much," he says, "in this Edmund's life is mysterious," and then he continues—"That he could, on occasion, do what he liked with his own, is meanwhile evident enough. Certain Heathen, Physical-Force, Ultra-Chartists, 'Danes,' as they were then called, coming into his territory with their 'five points,' or rather their five-and-twenty thousand *points* and edges too, of pikes, namely, and battle-axes; and proposing mere Heathenism, Confiscation, Spoliation, and fire and sword. Edmund answers that he would oppose to the utmost such savagery. They took him prisoner; again required his sanction to said proposals. Edmund again refused. Cannot we kill you? cried they. Cannot I die? answered he. My life, I think, is my own to do what I like with! And he died under barbarous tortures, refusing to the

last breath ; and the Ultra-Chartist Danes *lost* their propositions ; and went with their ‘ points ’ and other apparatus, as is supposed, to the Devil, the Father of them. Some say, indeed, these Danes were not Ultra-Chartists, but Ultra-Tories, demanding to reap where they had not sown, and live in this world without working, though all the world should starve for it ; which likewise seems a possible hypothesis. Be what they might, they went, as we say, to the devil ; and Edmund, doing what he liked with his own, the Earth was got cleared of them.”¹

I think we have here a striking specimen of the way in which the Saints live, and are objects of love as well as wonder to men in a way which has no parallel in the natural order. It was the cause he represented, and for which he died, that made St. Edmund an object of “ infinite admiration,” and to his order alone has it ever been granted. It is a participation in that Supreme domination over the mind and the heart which is the prerogative of Jesus Christ. In his imprisonment at St. Helena, Napoleon, comparing his own gigantic achievements with the great ones of the past, is reported to have said : “ Yet, after all, in what sense does Cæsar, in what sense does Alexander live ? Who knows or cares anything about them ? . . . But, on the con-

¹ *Past and Present*, p. 112.

trary, there is just One Name in the whole world that lives ; it is the Name of One who passed his life in obscurity, and who died a malefactor's death. . . . He is dead and gone, but still he lives—lives as the living, energetic thought of successive generations, as the awful motive power of a thousand great events.”¹

Doubtless, it will be objected that these confessions of men of the world to the reality of Christ, and the nothingness of those who live, as Napoleon said on the same occasion, merely “in boys’ grammars and exercise books, or as subjects for themes,” are only by the way. But, after all, is not this always the fate of Divine Truth, as well as of good deeds, in this “naughty world”? In the case of the Saints it should also be borne in mind that even amongst the devout there are innumerable varieties of taste and perception. The Saints are men and women, messengers indeed from heaven, but with human characters and surroundings, and no one need be ashamed to confess that he does not understand all of them—or that he is sometimes repelled by certain forms of individual sanctity: we must bear this humiliating evidence of the weakness and narrowness of our own minds. With still more reason, therefore, must we be patient with those outside the Church, who are eclectic in their admiration of our chiefs

¹ Quoted by Card. Newman, *Grammar of Assent*, p. 489.

and heroes. Carlyle said that St. Edmund "in very fact, had led a hero's life in this world," and Lord Macaulay recognised the great chancellor of Henry Tudor, Blessed Thomas More, as "one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue,"¹ probably because the picture was in an English frame: we have seen how the same sort of distant relationship, in the case of the philosophic Irish historian, Mr. Lecky, has enabled him to go down into the beautiful depths of Irish fidelity to their religion, "the passion and consolation of their lives."

It would, indeed, be unreasonable to expect in outsiders that range of intellectual and spiritual vision which implies an absolute freedom from all prepossessions. All that the Catholic apologist can do is to collect evidence similar to the above, scattered here and there in the literature of the last three hundred years, which, by the way, includes that of Voltaire himself in the case of St. Louis. The chief force of the argument founded on such authorities arises from the fact that natural genius and enthusiasm can discover no Saints outside the Church, although it is clear that were it possible the world would make much of its own:—

"As long as the world lasts,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has tears,"

¹ Essay on *Rankes' Popes*.

it is heroic goodness alone which will elicit the "infinite admiration of mankind." "Goodness," says Lord Bacon, "of all virtues and dignities of the mind is the greatest, being the character of the Deity; and without it man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin." Sacrifice of self he defines to be the summit of goodness, for "it shows much of a Divine Nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself";¹ and it is to the credit of our common nature that, in all ages and nations, it confirms the verdict of this extraordinary man, whom Cardinal Newman honours as "the most orthodox of Protestant philosophers."² Now it will hardly be disputed that the Catholic Church is the hereditary teacher of that sacrifice in the likeness of that of Christ, which has subdued the world. Indeed this extravagance, as they call it, is still one of the reproaches of her enemies, as it was in Pagan days. People may try to make little of it, and to pull it down to the level of Mahometan fanaticism, and Buddhist moral suicide; but what man in Europe is there who believes that these religions, and all other heathenisms past and present, have produced, or will ever produce, anything like that Christian sacrifice which is the divine consummation and the

¹ *Essay on Goodness.*

² *Idea of a University*, p. 319, ed. 1881.

crown of all that is beautiful and heroic in human love.

Some forty years ago, the world without Christ expected that Germany, with her Kant and Hegel, her Goethe and Schiller, was on the way to reform and put new life into the despairing heart of man. Mr. Stirling, the laborious interpreter of Hegel, tells us, "To preclude at once an entire sphere of objections, I remark that Kant and Hegel are the very reverse of the so-called 'German Party.' . . . It is the express mission of Kant and Hegel in effect to replace the *negative* of that party by an *affirmative*. Kant and Hegel . . . have no object but to restore Faith—Faith in God—Faith in the Immortality of the Soul, and the Freedom of the Will—nay, Faith in Christianity as the Revealed Religion, and that, too, in perfect harmony with the Rights of Private Judgment," &c., &c.¹ In the train of the Germans have come some hundred or more so-called systems of philosophy—each with a language of its own, a very babel of tongues; and last of all, poets and novelists have carried them still further into the regions of imagination and phantasmagoria from whence they come.

There is something very significant in the fact that in English speaking nations it is the novelist who is the popular and accredited agent of this

¹ *The Secret of Hegel*, vol. i. p. 12.

nebulous philosophy. German literature and language have grown up in an age of philosophic dreamers, and fit in with their dreams; but our classic authors, the writers in whose language we express our thoughts, are all Christian. As long as we are educated by Shakespeare, Bacon, Burke, and Goldsmith, insults to common sense will be followed by the inevitable retribution that falls on nonsense when it speaks out plainly—a punishment which it can only escape in quarters where amusement rather than common-sense is expected.

I have no inclination to trifle with a grave subject: it is its own fault if the vaulting ambition of reason is so ridiculous in its falls. No social, no political questions, are so serious as those eternal principles of truth in the soul of man which are distorted or effaced by false philosophy. It is the sadness and earnestness of Carlyle in the presence of this universal ruin which enables us to endure his paradoxes and fallacies. He is “tired to death,” as he tells us, with “Schiller and Goethe’s palabra,” and the “hollowness and airy nothingness of Kant”; and continues: “Poor silly sons of Adam, you have been prating on these things for two or three thousand years, and you have not advanced a hair’s breadth towards the conclusion,”¹—and yet he was a worshipper of German dreams! Thus it is that the

¹ *Life of Carlyle*, by J. A. Froude, vol. i. 196.

spoiled children of the world turn on their mother.
We find the same spirit in Tennyson :—

“What the philosophies, all the sciences, poesy, varying voices of
prayer?

All that is noblest, all that is basest, all that is filthy with all that
is fair?

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of
bees in their hive?”—

and on all sides in pain, in sickness, weariness, and old age, comes the same despairing cry from hearts from which Christ has been expelled.

Although it must seem a truism to say that works of fiction ought to be suspected as the professional agents of invention, it is worth while now-a-days to remind people of the fact. It would be no slight gain to the modern mind if it could be led to transfer the discussion of spiritual questions from the arena of fiction to that of poetry. The great difference between them is, that while the novelist makes his subject, it is his subject that makes the poet. It is very significant that St. Paul quotes the heathen poets, while he warns us to “avoid foolish and old wives' fables,” and such, no doubt, he would have esteemed the religious novels of our day. The poet so far as he is a poet, is the child of nature, and nature is according to the measure of God, to which he must adhere at his peril, while the novelist is an artist who paints

according to his own fancy, or the orders of his patrons. George Eliot might very well have taken Luther and Catherine Bora, as the subjects of one of those stories in which, as Mr. Ruskin remarks of the *Mill on the Floss*, "interest is obtained with the vulgar reader for the vilest character, because the author describes carefully to his recognition the blotches, burrs, and pimples in which the paltry nature resembles his own,"¹ but the wings of the poet would soon become conglutinated in such an atmosphere.

The novelist is expected to be the courtier and flatterer of the world; but the poet is its teacher and censor. It is needless to say that the Christian can never place the poet on the throne to which modern as well as ancient Paganism have raised him. He is a teacher of the truth only so long as he is its disciple, and if he play the master he is just as likely to become its enemy. "Woe to thee, torrent of human passion," says St. Augustine, "have I not seen Jupiter in your pages at once, thunderer and adulterer. 'Forsooth, an Homeric image, he lifts man to the gods.' Would that he brought the divinity down to us."² For all that, the poet is one of the greatest human witnesses to

¹ "Fiction—Fair and Foul," *Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1881, p. 520. His view of George Eliot was, I believe, shared by such opposite characters as Lord Beaconsfield and Carlyle.

² *Confessions*, i. 16.

God, and it is only the believing poet who preserves dominion over the minds of men. Of Shakespeare, Cardinal Newman writes, "He upholds the broad laws of moral and divine truth with the consistency and severity of an Æschylus, Sophocles, or Pindar."¹

But it is in Dante, above all poets, that we find evidence of the kindred of genius and sanctity. Shakespeare has made the wisdom of Solomon and of the Sapiential Books of Holy Scripture, familiar to many to whom the inspired writings would have little attraction. He has sounded the depths of "that fierce wretchedness that glory brings us"—of that passion for gold, "which can bless the accursed and make the hoar leprosy adored," and of "murder that is as near to lust as fire to smoke." He has taught us what life is; but Dante teaches what life may, and ought to be. It is Carlyle, the man who had drunk so deeply of the *vinum dæmonum* of Germany, who, contrasting him with Mahomet, says of Dante and "his mystic unfathomable song"; "Dante speaks to the noble, the pure, and the great, in all times and places. Neither does he grow obsolete as the other does. Dante burns as a pure star, fixed there in the firmament, at which the great and the high of all ages kindle themselves; he is the possession of all the chosen of the world for uncounted time.

¹ *Idea of a University*, p. 318.

. . . One need not wonder if it were predicted that his poem might be the most enduring thing our Europe has yet made." Again he says: "The nation that has a Dante is bound together as no dumb Russia can be." The man who wrote thus of the greatest of Christian poets, whose motto might have been with St. Paul, "To re-establish all things in Christ that are in Heaven and on earth": this man was an antagonist to Christ: he acknowledges, indeed, that Christ was "the wisest of men," "the highest voice ever heard on this earth"; but he merely gave Him that divided allegiance, which is treason, when, in the same breath, he worshipped Luther, Knox, Cromwell, and Mahomet—men who are the incarnations of that brute force, condemned and conquered by the submission of its Divine victim. And so like traitors to Christianity, in all ages Carlyle has missed that place in literature which his genius and many noble instincts would have certainly won for him.¹

¹ In his loathing and detestation of impurity he does not spare his friend Goethe. Of *Wilhelm Meister* he writes: "I am going to write a fierce preface disclaiming all concern with the literary or moral merit of the work" (*Life* by Froude, i. p. 212). It is evident that Carlyle agrees with Longfellow, who says of Goethe: "What I most object to in the old gentleman is his sensuality . . . he does not so much idealise as realise"; and he compares his *Ethics of Nature* to those of the artists who made the bronze lamps of Pompeii, and asks: "Would you hang one of those in your hall?" (*Prose Works*, p. 99, 503.)

Perhaps to some it may seem that I have gone wide of my theme, or attempted too much, when I have called in Dante as witness and interpreter to St. Patrick. I have done so because my subject is one in which temporal questions are weighed in a spiritual balance, and because beyond all secular writers Dante has shown how earth is the vassal of Heaven, and how it is from this subjection, that life here below derives all its meaning and its dignity. The title of *The Vision of Dante*, which Mr. Cary gives to his translation, is a commentary in itself; but it is the vision of one whose eyes, like those of the prophet, were ever *attenuati suspicientis in excelso*. But this was not enough for his purpose. He understood, better perhaps than any poet ancient or modern, that his inspiration did not come direct from heaven like that of the writers of Holy Scripture—that it was reflected light. Hence, that soul of Dante, high as Heaven and deep as hell, and wide-spreading as the sea, was opened to receive the wisdom and light of primeval tradition and Revelation, and all those unchanging truths which, even in the minds of the heathen, had endured when all things else had changed and passed away. It is not his imagery and the music of his verse which gives the poet that character of prophet which even St. Paul seems to attribute to

his office.¹ The themes of the *Divina Commedia*, the Love "that moves the sun in heaven and all the stars," and the "Virgin Mother, daughter of her Son," were the property of all minds as well as of Dante, but he alone is prophet or interpreter, in the scriptural sense, who has power to see and to reveal their meaning and object.

To return to the immediate subject of this Essay, who will venture to deny to St. Patrick a vision even clearer than that of Dante? From the *Confession*, *The Epistle*, and the *Breastplate of St. Patrick*, we learn the character of his soul, and the nature of that influence which, for sixty years, he exercised over those *Ibernas Gentes*, on whom he has impressed the seal of his resemblance. If he is still an image and a manifestation of the invisible world, and a bond of union between heaven and earth, how great must the wonder have been when the spirit, now diffused and reflected, was revealed in a visible presence? He gave that heathen people knowledge of Christ "made man, and Victor over

¹ "One of them said, a prophet of their own . . . this testimony is true." (Epistle to Titus, i. 12.) According to St. Jerome, St. Paul here quotes Epimenides, a poet of Crete. Although commentators are careful to point out the very limited sense in which the word "prophet" is here used, still it is remarkable that, on another occasion, we find St. Paul appealing to a poet in his address to the Athenians.

death, drawn back to the Father in Heaven,"¹ and that one sovereign truth, retained in its integrity, and carried on to its legitimate conclusions, embraces all this world can contain of that truth and beauty of the invisible, which, to revert to the words of Lord Bacon, impresses on man "the character of the Deity," and which, say what he will, is the one thing which man really worships in his fellow-man.

It is not enough to say that St. Patrick is merely a watch-word, or a name expressive of a cause like the "St. George for merrie England," of the Anglo-Norman knights. Even Dr. Todd, as we have seen, finds St. Patrick in the fire-side lore, local traditions, and warm hearted devotion of the people, as well as in the names of towns, churches, and monasteries in Ireland. We cannot understand what that spirit is, which, for fourteen centuries, has held a people together like soldiers in their ranks, any more than we can define the nature of the soul which governs our own members : we know it from its operations. Far be it from us to make light of the reforms and new devotions which, in other countries, have been the remedies of corruptions, or weapons against heresy ; but we are in our right if we say that we love best, and place most confidence in, that form of religion

¹ *Confession of St. Patrick*, i. § 2.

which approaches nearest to the purity and simplicity of the Apostolic type.

In the order of nature as well, it is both wisdom and good taste to respect our elders ; Father Faber says : “ while times change very much men change very little, and God not at all ” ;¹ and in the same strain Cardinal Newman writes : “ It is a fault of these times (for we have nothing to do with the faults of other times) to despise the past in comparison of the present. We can scarcely open any of the lighter or popular publications of the day, without falling on some panegyric on ourselves, on the illumination and humanity of the age, or upon some disparaging remarks on the wisdom and virtue of former times. Now it is a most salutary thing under this temptation to self-conceit to be reminded that, in all the highest qualifications of human excellence, we have been far outdone by men who lived centuries ago.” Again : “ How great are the old Greek law-givers and statesmen, whose histories and works are known to some of us, and whose names to many more ! How great are those stern Roman heroes who conquered the world and prepared a way for Christ ! How wise, how profound, are those ancient teachers and sages ! What power of imagination, what a semblance of prophecy is manifested in their poets ! The present

¹ *Conferences*, p. 355.

world is in many respects not so great as that old time." ¹

In Revealed Religion, the essential glory of which consists in its being an emanation of the Divinity, the conservative can never be called a doter on the dead and gone. Moreover, the more uninterrupted is the stream from the primeval fountain the more likely it is to be pure and unadulterated, and so are we led to the conclusion that if the faith of Ireland has endured better than that of other nations, it is because her people are the most conservative. It cannot be said that it has not been tried, or that it has been isolated from those influences which have infused new life into the religion of other countries. The great religious orders, Augustinians, Cistercians, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Trinitarians covered Ireland with religious houses, whose ruins are now her most pathetic glory;² but it does not appear that these Religious Orders imparted any new spirit into

¹ *Parochial Sermons*, xxxii. ; *Discourses*, viii.

² Henry VIII. suppressed more than 400 monasteries in Ireland. (*Monasticon Hibernicum*, p. 8.) In this work we find the records of twenty Priories and Commanderies of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. The *Gesta Dei per Hibernos* in the Holy Land has yet to be written. Friar Glynn of Kilkenny in his *Annals* writes: "A.D. 1335, on Thursday the eve of Lucy the Virgin, a great Cross was erected in the market-place of Kilkenny at that time; many flying to the Cross were marked on the bare flesh with a red-hot iron that they might go to the Holy Land."

the country ; but rather that one and all they took St. Patrick as their master, and became as truly *Hibernis Hiberniores* in the spiritual order, as the Danes and Normans in things temporal.

CHAPTER V.

THE FUTURE ?

A VOYAGE into the Future, even in imagination, is fraught with dangers, for somehow men's minds are prone to claim a sort of domination in that unknown land. Now the poet who never goes out of his depth and is always practical says :—

. . . “the future comes apace.
Who shall defend the interim ?”

This is all that we can do, but this is a great deal, for the future must be born of the present. Most people have their views about what is coming and as a rule their wishes are the parents of their anticipations, so as might be expected, there is very little harmony amongst the prophets. One teacher and only one has power and authority to bring about an agreement, and this is the Past, in so far as its continuity extends to the Present, for that which was, and is no longer, has no claim upon the Future. With his usual clearness and brilliancy Lord Macaulay applies this principle to the life of

¹ *Timon of Athens*, ii. 2.
(252)

the Catholic Church, and argues that as "she saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world, we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all."¹

As far then as what is called the near Future of Ireland is concerned, there can be no doubt that the Catholic Church must play an important part, and the object of this Essay is to give reasons why there should be what the French felicitously style an *entente cordiale* between the Catholic Church in Ireland and the British Government. Hitherto, in what may be called our judicial investigation of the condition of religion in Ireland, I have studiously avoided all allusion to Catholic witnesses, taking my stand on the evidence of Protestants whose impartiality is not likely to be questioned. If now I introduce a Catholic writer into the discussion it is not as a witness, but as a judge. In the pages of Gustave de Beaumont² the Irish question rises to an elevation, and assumes a majesty such as we vainly look for in our own writers, either Catholic or Protestant, whose philosophic moderation is often sadly distorted by political considerations. His castigation of his Trinity Col-

¹ Essay on Ranke's *Hist. of the Popes*.

² *L'Irlande Sociale Politique et Religieuse*, par Gustave de Beaumont, Membre de l'Institut, 7^{ième}, Ed. Paris, 1881, p. 42.

lege translator, Dr. Taylor,¹ all the more stinging because of its exquisite courtesy, for his introduction of his own good stories and jokes into the text of M. de Beaumont ought to be better known to all those lively and facetious writers who in Anglo-Irish polemics emulate Aristophanes hired by the enemies of Socrates to personate the great Athenian on the stage and defile him in the minds of the populace.

In his chapter on religious persecutions in Ireland, M. de Beaumont observes: "If this part of my work has any value it is to be found entirely in the rational development of facts, and the philosophic deduction of ideas." The following are some of his conclusions. "There are moral and human questions which are eternal, the grandeur of which never perishes; which, independent of time and place and the fortunes of States, outlive the great as well as the little quarrels of Empires. Amongst an unfortunate people we can best study these human questions, while the moral aspect is best understood amongst a people whose misery is an injustice. And who can name a land more unfortunate than Ireland, or a people whose misery has been more unmerited? . . . To the moralist who, mourning over the miseries of mankind, examines their equity, or their injustice,

¹ Vol. ii. p. 319.

what country is so inspiring as Ireland, where every misery is intertwined with some virtue, and whose greatest calamities have had their origin in her fidelity to her religion? Where can he find lessons more varied, more sorrowful, and more consoling? Where can he see more clearly than in the annals of the English domination in Ireland, how, when once started on an iniquitous course, men are, as it were, fated to travel to the end, and forced on to extremities before which at starting they would have drawn back in horror? . . . Where do we see so many perils attached to oppression, and so many unforeseen blessings as the price of death for the sake of justice? . . . Where do we see so clearly as in Ireland the extraordinary succours which religion lends to virtue?"

Again, in colours as true as they are vivid, he depicts those open wounds of Ireland which it is so hard to heal:—

"I do not believe that there exists a country where the conquest, dating so far back, has left traces at once so ancient, and so full of life. It seems as if the ages in their course have healed none of her sores. The earth is still bleeding with her wounds; on all sides it has been devastated by wars, everywhere stricken by confiscation. . . . Alongside of the conquerors are the conquered, with their minds still haunted by the remembrance

of better days. 'This land,' they will tell you, 'belonged to my ancestor; Cromwell gave it to one of his soldiers, who passed it on to his children. This castle, now held by a newly-made English nobleman, was wrested by William III. from an Irishman of royal and illustrious race and blood, whose descendants now delve the lands over which their ancestors once reigned.'

"But, above all, it is the wounds of religious wars which are still living and deep in Ireland. Religion enters into everything in Ireland. The facts of her history from the time when she was styled the 'Island of Saints' until those later ages when she was persecuted for her faith; the struggles of the Conquest; the revolutions which have supervened; successive governments; her social state in our own days; the classes and political parties which divide; the passions which animate; the character, the manners, and the intellectual development of her inhabitants; even the geographical divisions of her territory are all marked with the sign of religion."

Again, in his second volume he returns to the same subject:—

"In the midst of convulsions in his country, and in his own soul, the Irishman, who within and without has had such experience of ruin, has no faith in the certainty or stability of anything in this

world, save his religion; that religion old as Ireland herself; that religion which has risen above man, time and revolutions . . . their attitude is humble, their language timid: they receive as a favour that which they might demand as a right; they do not believe in that equality which the law secures. But if from the street you pass into the church you are at once impressed by the contrast. Here the most downcast countenances are uplifted and the lowliest heads are raised; faces bearing the impress of the most exalted nobility are lifted heavenward, and the dignity of man is made manifest. The Irish exist in their Churches; there alone they feel that they are free; there alone they are certain of their rights. There they occupy the only ground which has never sunk beneath their feet.”¹

I do not think that anyone will deny either the fact, of the philosophic member of the Institute of France, or what he calls their “rational development.” No doubt Mr. Froude and all kindred spirits will regard his admiration as misplaced. “As a rule,” says the historian of the *English in Ireland*, “superior strength is the equivalent of superior merit,” and again, “The right to resist depends on the power of resistance.”² “With

¹ *L'Irlande*, ii. p. 37.

² Vol. i. p. 4.

Englishmen you should know," says Cardinal Newman, "success is the measure of principle, and power is the exponent of right. Do you not understand our rule of action? We take up men and lay them down, we praise or we blame, we feel respect or contempt according as they succeed or are defeated. You are wrong because you are in misfortune, power is truth."¹

If anyone is inclined to question M. de Beaumont's facts because of the splendour of his eloquence, which shines even through this poor translation, he should reflect that the same enthusiasm has carried away the stern Protestant Sir Francis Head, and the rationalistic Mr. Lecky, and others as little likely to be deceived by their feelings. Nothing so manifests man's nobility and wins admiration as sacrifice for principle, even when the principle in itself is a mistaken one; how much more when it is one which is sacred to all mankind. The truth is, even virtue itself is commonplace without sacrifice of self: no one admires a man for giving away his money if he is sure of an equivalent, or for saying his prayers if he only prays for himself. When we appeal to the world to do justice to the virtues of the Irish people, it is not altogether an indifferent matter to the world itself. Even those who do not see their way to practise adherence to principle

¹ *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, xii.

must acknowledge that it is desirable to find it in those on whom they are obliged to depend. Despair of the future is a widespread malady now in those who have something to lose, and who find themselves face to face with power without principle; that wild beast which devours everyone, its keepers included. There is just one ruler in the world who has reasonable grounds for hope; and that is the Catholic Church. She has succeeded in the past, and therefore she hopes to succeed in the future. One of the best signs of our times is the change in men's dispositions towards that austere and beautiful legislation of self-sacrifice which is the foundation and the animating principle of all real Christianity. It is true that there are varieties and degrees in these laws of self-devotion as innumerable as those of the material universe, and that while the world now encourages moderate devotion, it has still its old fear and repulsion for those rugged and cloud-capped summits of perfection from which the Saints ascend to God. But logic always goes on to its natural conclusion when it has self-interest as its auxiliary. Individual liberty, call it constitutional freedom, or democracy, as you please, is becoming the law of the world; but until the end of the world the multitude will be ruled by the heroic few, and peace will reign in proportion to the extent in which the Christian ideal is

the object of their worship. The example of men who have been successful in self-aggrandisement will never have much effect in quieting the hungry stomach, or the discontented heart. But suppose it came to pass that fasting became the fashion, and poverty a distinction, what a change there would be in the world, and this is precisely what the Church has done, and is doing, and will ever do, in the case of all the pure hearts and illuminated intelligences to which the Gospel on the Mount is the light and consolation of life.

Those who preach what they have never practised, and never intend to practise, are playing a dangerous game. As the French philosophers of the Revolution found at the cost of their heads, it is not safe to give mere pearls of political economy to that multitude which every day, for good or evil, is growing more intelligent and critical. By all means let us have economics, so long as we do not stop there, as if all things in heaven and earth were possible to money. On the other hand, while the world, or, at least, the reasonable part of it, as Mr. Lecky has told us, is governed by its ideals—as it ought to be if the ideal is the true one—there are limits to such a dominion. No matter how passionate a man's love of that ideal may be, in the present condition of our fallen race it is sheer hypocrisy to tell him that it must fill his

stomach, or that of his wife and children. Even granting that a hero ought to rise above all base cupidity for meat and drink, it is too much to expect this spirit in his infant children. St. Francis of Assisi never went so far as this. He never dreamt that all men were bound to the counsels of perfection; it is the misuse, not the making of money, which is accursed of God and man.

One evidence of the abiding presence of St. Patrick in Ireland remains to be considered, and it is the most important of all—I mean the character of the Irish Catholic clergy. It is not for one of their cloth to sit in judgment, especially one like the present writer, who from childhood to old age has been united to them by the ties of the tenderest friendship. Neither, as a rule, can we accept the judgment of Protestants. Few, indeed, amongst them have mastered the idea of the priest. Edmund Burke, indeed, has done so in those marvellous letters written at the end of his life to Bishop Hussey, in which it is hard to say whether sympathy with Irish Catholics, or detestation of Orange Protestantism predominates.¹ I think, therefore, I may again be allowed to place M. de Beaumont on the judicial bench. As a Catholic, he could understand

¹Gratton was hardly above the mark when he called Burke "The prodigy of nature and of acquisition. He read everything—he saw everything." (Philips' *Life of Curran*, p. 91.)

the meaning of what priests were doing, and he had the other great advantage that his susceptibilities were not shocked and confused by strangeness of accent, and the use of archaic English words, now accounted barbarous and obsolete in England.

Immediately after the summary given of the effects of religion on the people, M. de Beaumont continues :—

“The Catholic clergy, the depositary of the chief national power in Ireland, exercise it under the *ægis* of the constitution, and in order to comprehend the nature of this power, it is necessary to take in the relations of the people to their priests, as well as those which bind them to their religion. Think of those innumerable classes of inferior grade, who, in Ireland, are laden at one and the same time with all the burthens and all the miseries of society, pitilessly ground down by the avaricious proprietor, exhausted by taxes, and finally consummated in ruin by the representative of the law—Who is their only support in their sufferings? The priest. . . . Who is it that gives them (a gift perhaps worth still more) the sympathy which consoles, the voice which upholds, and that human tear which brings so many blessings to the miserable? In Ireland one man, and one man only, weeps with the poor, who have so many reasons to weep: that man is the priest. . . . They who in

Ireland are not oppressors of the people, at the best are accustomed to despise them. In that country the Catholic clergy was the only class I could discover who loved the lower orders, and spoke of them with respect. To my mind, this in itself is enough to explain the power of the priest in Ireland.

“The mission of the Catholic clergy in Ireland is the most exalted that imagination can conjure up. It is an accident: because for its origin it needed a combination of miseries, which, happily, are confined to that country. But the clergy of Ireland has not been unworthy of its fortune: a wonderful field was laid open, the greatness of which it has understood, fulfilling its duties with sublime devotion. On the Continent people have but a faint idea of the conditions of the life of a Catholic priest in Ireland, who, in the terrible war waged by the rich upon the poor, is the sole refuge of the latter, and who, to succour his fellow-man, flings himself into the combat with an ardour and a constancy which the most violent and selfish ambition rarely brings to the furtherance of its own designs.”¹

Amongst the many grave thoughts suggested by these extracts, none is more serious than that stern accusation of scorn for the poor which M. de Beaumont brings against the upper classes in

¹ *L'Irlande*, vol. ii. p. 38.

Ireland. The thing itself is common enough elsewhere. "*The poor man,*" says the Inspired Writer, "*shall be hateful even to his own neighbour; but the friends of the rich are many*"; and St. Teresa says: "It very seldom happens that a poor person obtains honour in this world, however much his virtues may entitle him to it." But in Ireland that unforgiving hatred which is born of injustice, adds intensity to scorn. Nature alone, the chivalry of a generous heart which is its own reward, has power enough to make us forgive those who have injured us: here the triumphs and advantages are all on our side; but repentance must be its own reward.¹

It certainly does seem that in some respects things have improved since the days of Solomon, and St. Teresa. The "Light of the World" goes on unto the perfect day. His image rests on the dark man in Africa, and His presence is a boon even to His enemies. However much we may deplore the excesses of what Burke calls the "tyranny of freedom," for all that, as Fr. Faber remarks, Liberty "is of all false worships the least blameworthy, although the greatest of crimes have

¹ See Bishop Milner's observations on the kindly feelings of the Irish for the English, and the other mystery which he sums up in the words of Tacitus, *Proprium est humani generis odisse quem læseris*. (*Inquiry*, x. p. 43.)

been perpetrated in its name.”¹ The principle every day gains ground that no just man should deny to another that freedom which, under similar circumstances, he would demand for himself. With all its errors, that modern chivalry which sympathises with the oppressed of all races is a growth from Christian ground, and its excesses are perhaps not greater than those of that ancient chivalry, whose setting seemed to Burke to be extinction of the glory of Europe. Little did he think, in the desolation of his heart, that he himself, beyond all men in modern times, was infusing into modern politics that very spirit of tenderness and respect and passionate enthusiasm for the weak and persecuted which was the animating principle of Christian chivalry. Exalted as is the estimate M. de Beaumont forms of the place of the Priest amongst the poor, it falls short of that of Burke, when, in his impeachment of Warren Hastings, he addressed the Bishops of England, and reminded them that they were “the representatives of that religion which says that their God is love, that the very vital spirit of their institution is charity—a religion which so much hates oppression, that when the God whom we adore appeared in human form, He did not appear in a form of greatness and majesty, but in sympathy

¹ *The Creator and Creature*, p. 104, where he shows how Liberty has become the servant of the Gospel.

with the lowest of the people, and thereby made it a firm and ruling principle that their welfare was the object of all government, since the Person who was the Master of Nature chose to appear Himself in a subordinate situation.”¹

The spiritual elevation of the poor is now the vital problem of society—vital in every sense of the word—but we shall make little way unless, with Burke, we infuse into the question ideas more exalted than those of mere property, and its duties. When their rulers give to the poor that honour which is theirs by right divine, as first in the kingdom of heaven, they will go a long way in reconciling them to their lot. They are getting power, and they are determined that they will have all that is essential to the rights of the family, and the dignity of man; and our wisdom must be that of Burke, in 1775, in face of American discontent: “The question is not,” said he, “whether their spirit deserves praise or blame; but what, in the name of God, shall we do with it?” Very few people now continue to hope that either Mr. Huxley’s “Lay Sermons” or Sir John Lubbock’s experiments will produce any deep or lasting impression on hearts in Whitechapel, or the mining

¹ At the same time this was the man who received letters from Pius VI. and nearly every sovereign in Europe in acknowledgment of his services in establishing the principles of authority.

districts. But there in sight of the English shore are millions of poor, descendants of parents poorer than themselves, in whom, as we have seen, every unprejudiced observer finds courage, generosity, maiden modesty, and conjugal fidelity — the virtues which are the basis of Christian civilisation. Dr. Forbes and Mr. Stuart Trench tell us this; and all who of late years have had the courage to face the mortifications of Irish poverty have come back to England with the same testimony. As I have shown, it is not because the Irish are not tempted; neither is it because virtue in Ireland is an ingredient in the Celtic blood. There is not a more mixed race in the world than the Irish,¹ and we all know that their children, separated from the influences of home, are as little like their parents as the English in America. There is not a rational and honest man in the world who can attribute the attractive qualities and virtues of the poor in Ireland to anything but their religion.

¹ Sir John Davies, Attorney-General in Ireland under James I. from 1606 to 1612, is generally esteemed to have been one of the most sagacious observers of Irish life in his day. On his return to England he published his "Discoveries of the True Causes" of Irish disturbances. It is dedicated to the king, with the very wholesome suggestion, *Principis Est Virtus Maxima Nosse Suos*. He says that the "*Bodies and Minds of the people were endowed with extraordinary abilities of Nature,*" and declares that "if the people were numbered at this day by the Poll, such as are descended of English race would be found more in number than the ancient Natives (p. 6). Of course for "English" he should read chiefly "Norman."

M. de Beaumont observes, that in no other country has the Catholic religion had such a field for the manifestation of the empire of Faith in adversity. If this be so, then there is no people in the world so worthy of the patient and respectful study of the politician, as well as the philosopher. For three centuries, with the loss of every earthly consolation, ever offered as the price of disloyalty, not merely individuals, but a nation has been faithful to that pure and exalted ideal embodied in the lines of the National Poet :—

“Thy rival was honour’d, whilst thou were wronged and scorn’d,
 Thy crown was of briars, while gold her brows adorn’d ;
 She woo’d me to temples, whilst thou layest hid in caves,
 Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas ! were slaves ;
 Yet cold in the earth, at thy feet I would rather be,
 Than wed what I love not, or turn one thought from thee.”

And this ideal is no mere æsthetic invention of man : it is something definite and permanent, and it has ruled in Ireland for fourteen centuries. It is neither more nor less than the ideal of St. Paul : “*The substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.*” It is the ideal which conquered the living Paganism of Greece, the “Enchantress of the nations,” and the luxury of Rome ; and from that day to this has governed the great family of the redeemed. It is the only ideal which can make the multitude patient under that heavy load of labour and pain and un-

certainly for the morrow, which must ever be the lot of the majority of mankind. The religion which has made sovereigns like St. Louis and St. Elizabeth the servants of the poor has lost none of its attractions over pure and chivalrous and self-sacrificing hearts. It is an outrage to the image of God in man to say that all men are born to be the slaves of avarice. Like every passion, it is fed by indulgence, and has its beginning, middle, and end; and those who know the poor are witnesses to the truth that their hearts, like those of children, are best prepared for the sublime sacrifices of the Gospel when it is preached to them by men whose own lives are evidences of their sincerity. The peace which is more than resignation fills the hearts of the poor, when the favourites of the world take their place with them in the ranks, and deem it an honour to be allowed to wear the same livery of Christ. Give the sons of St. Francis of Assisi, and the daughters of St. Vincent of Paul, and all their kindred associations in Ireland, something more than a mere suspicious and niggardly toleration. Let them have dominion in schools, work-houses, and hospitals. Let the Crucifix by the wayside, and the sweet face of the Madonna look down on those whose hearts are tortured by adversity, and you will have little need of the agents of the law. It is now more than a quarter of a century

since the head of the Church in Ireland warned our rulers that in the "Godless colleges" and those kindred institutions wherein the teachers of poor schools were trained up in antagonism to the Church, they were hatching those broods of secret societies which would turn upon themselves, and we have seen the fulfilment of that awful prophecy. It is vain to preach patience to the poor if you rob them of their eternal birthright. Communism is inevitable if men have no thought for any world but this. Avarice, the mother of communism, which brings men as low as wild beasts fighting over their prey, can only be conquered by the charity which creates the Saints with.

. . . "Will roll'd onward, like a wheel
In even motion, by the love impell'd
That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars."¹

It is their share in the love that is infinite and eternal which makes them the fierce and scornful enemies of the world, for nothing is so intolerant as love. And yet in this they are but crowning the edifice of reason, and raising the dome that reaches from earth to heaven. When Vincent de Paul, *Imperator Charitatis Christi*, laid down, and carried out in action, the principle that "man is never so rich as when he is like Jesus

¹ Last words of the *Paradiso*.

Christ," he gave light, and meaning, and life to the stern philosophy of Shakespeare :—

. . . "If thou art rich, thou art poor ;
For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
And death unloads thee."¹

Perfect and unlimited sympathy between the Church and the world there can never be. They are rival rulers, but as the scene of their domination is one and the same, and as it is impossible to make away with either, in certain departments at least, they must work together. The world wants the Church more than the Church wants the world. If it can be proved that the normal and legitimate action of the Catholic Church is to make her children good sons and daughters, husbands, wives, and subjects, I do not see how it can be doubted that it is the interest of the State to give the Church that amount of support and encouragement which, humanly speaking, is necessary, seeing that she works, not by the ministry of angels, but by that of beings of flesh and blood.² Moreover, if it appears that, in spite of the errors and shortcomings of so many of

¹ *Measure for Measure*, iii. 1.

² "It cannot, however, be doubted that to attain the purpose of which we treat, not only the Church, but all human means must conspire. All who are concerned in the matter must be of one mind and must act together. It is in this as in the Providence which governs the world ; results do not happen save where all the causes co-operate." (Leo XIII. "On the Conditions of Labour.")

her agents, the Catholic Church is the most successful teacher of those social virtues which make good citizens, it follows that beyond all other religions she deserves the confidence and encouragement of the State. That we should think that it is so, is not surprising; the real wonder is that some of the wisest men outside the Church have had the same opinion.

If I lay stress on the authority of Edmund Burke, it is because he is one of the few writers on those social questions which stir up fierce party passions who obtains the confidence of partisans on both sides. For more than a century many have looked to him as to the political arbiter of the civilised world in that social strife which is the legacy of the French Revolution; and, strange to say, it is amongst his antagonists that we find his most awe-struck admirers. Erskine, says Mr. Payne, wrote against Burke's *Letters on the Regicide Peace*, and confessed at the same time that when he looked into his own mind he found "all its best lights and principles fed from that immense magazine of moral and political wisdom." A sense, he said, of mingled "awe and gratitude" checked him, even in that respectful liberty which he allowed himself in the controversy. And Mr. Payne continues: "This estimate was not Erskine's alone. Those who wish to see to what intellectual eminence

it is possible for a man to attain in his life-time should read the Parliamentary debates of this time. Burke's opinions, on all subjects, are there quoted, like Scripture, by all parties, and in the most opposite senses."¹ No one will say that this was owing to vagueness or uncertainty on his part, but rather to the fact that the "Irish Constellation," as he was styled by his political antagonist Dr. Johnson, gave the light of his principles to many who had not courage to go on to his conclusions. The same partition of the great philosopher has begun again in the writings of some of our present leaders of public opinion, with results very much to the disadvantage of the defenceless dead. It is indeed a strange phenomenon to find the disciples of Rousseau and Voltaire, Burke's "Smugglers of adulterated metaphysics," sailing under the flag of one who, in 1793, was welcomed by the reigning Pontiff, Pius VI., as the man sent to "overturn and scatter" the Atheists of France.² Again, we can imagine what the astonishment of Burke would have been were he to find his philosophy taken as the text of a laboured argument in favour of State education: the annihila-

¹ *Regicide Peace*, Introd., pp. xxxix.-xl.

² *Qui célébré elucubrasti opus ad evertenda et profliganda novorum Galliae philosophorum commenta.* (Letter of Pius VI. to Edmund Burke. Theiner, *Affaires Religieuses de la France* (1793), p. 199.)

tion of the sacred sanctuary of the Christian home.¹

The truth is that it is only the Christian politician who can honestly use the authority of Edmund Burke. "We know," he writes, "and what is better we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good, and of all comfort";² and again: "Our humanity, our morals, our religion . . . the constitution is made by these things, and for these things: without these it cannot exist; and without them it is no matter whether it exists or not"; and then with the unmeasured indignation which befits an immeasurable outrage to the spirit of Christianity, he lays bare the most insidious of all the inventions of atheistic France: her "schools of Atheism set up at the public charge in every part of the country," and he concludes: "That the Christian religion

¹ *Irish Essays*, by Matthew Arnold, pp. 10-76. On this writer's principles denominational education would not be worth seven years' purchase. It is plain that he does not understand Burke. For instance (p. 14), he says "He was for a Union"; whereas Burke calls it "a business . . . that is next to impossible." Probably Mr. Arnold had read the statement in Prior's *Life of Burke* that the idea was in Burke's mind that the "Superior, or Imperial politics of Ireland," should be in England. (Burke's *Correspondence*, iv. p. 65; Prior, ii. 392.) Mr. Lecky is better informed: "It was the opinion of Burke that a Legislative Union would not be for the mutual advantage of the two kingdoms. (*History of England*, vi. p. 512.)

² *Revolution in France*, p. 6, Payne's Ed.

cannot exist in this country with such a paternity will not, I think, be disputed with me. On that religion, according to our mode, all our laws and institutions stand as on their base.”¹

Now this is the writer who weighs in the balance the comparative social influence of the Christian communities in these islands. In the first place he alludes to those “gentlemen who call themselves Protestants,” and observes: “I do not well know what that word means, and nobody ever would, or could inform me,” and continues: “He (the Catholic priest) and his congregation are bound by the authority of their whole Church in all times and in all countries, whose general and collective authority infinitely lessens the individual authority of every private pastor, as the strictness of other laws lessens the power of individual magistrates. Whereas, most of us (Protestants) who examine critically, full as little as any of them, and, for the greater part, think less about it, and are indeed incapable of doing so—we do, and must receive our doctrine from our priest, who himself is not bound to anything beyond his own ideas; and, consequently, the mass of us depend more upon the individual pastor. Whether I am right in the theory or not, this I know that the fact is as I state it. A Catholic goes to confession. The Church of England thinks it a

¹ *Regicide Peace*, pp. 337, 347, 352, Payne's Ed.

commendable practice, but does not practise it. The Papist thinks it a sacrament, and that he must practise it. Therefore, when he does it, he does it by a table (catechism) which any man can buy for sixpence; and he is well apprised that, if he performs the common conditions, which he knows as well as his parish minister (bating some trifling observances more or less), he must have his absolution whether the priest will it or not, or he has matter of charge against him. It is so of all the sacraments and other ritual observances. Accordingly, I believe there is no penitent in Ireland who would not laugh his priest to scorn if, sitting in the confession-box, instead of interrogating him on the seven deadly sins, he was to say a word to him on this topic,¹ or of the election, or any political topic whatsoever."

Burke is not the only Protestant who has had the sense to see that the Catholic Church is the most trustworthy agent of the moral law, for the simple reason that she alone never dreams that it is within her province to tamper with it in obedience to the times. In the same strain Lord Fitzwilliam, another Irish Protestant, writes: "All nations have

¹ The "topic" in question "was bribing the Catholic clergy." "You observe very rightly," he says, "that this would be the destruction of all religion whatsoever; and when that is destroyed nothing can be saved, or is worth saving." (*Correspondence*, vol. iv. p. 10, *et seq.*)

their religion and their laws. . . . But in the Roman Catholic Church alone there exist laws of an authority far more imperious, and which no art or sophistry can disguise . . . laws which do not confine themselves to the punishment of crimes, but which anticipate them." Of the confessional he says: "Can we find elsewhere anything which resembles this? Here conscience is regulated by the tribunal of God, and not of the world. Here the criminal is his own accuser, and not his Judge. And while the Christian of every other communion examines himself superficially, decides his own cause, and absolves himself with indulgence, the Catholic Christian is scrupulously examined by another and awaits his sentence from heaven."¹

These philosophic views concerning the influence of the Catholic Priesthood are daily becoming more and more the common property of thoughtful people all over the world. They are beginning to see, with Burke, that the subjection of priests and people to a common law is the one preservation of what may be called the balance of power in a com-

¹ *Letters of Atticus*, addressed to the exiled King of France in 1811, and translated into English in 1826. In the *Collegians* (p. 170) Gerald Griffm introduces a Catholic who argues that Protestants do not need the same courage as Catholics in the matter of duelling; owing to their "wide discretionary range on most ethical, as well as theological points of opinion, whereas a Catholic believes that if he dies in a duel his soul is lost for ever."

munity. An eloquent Protestant, who is a law to himself, may carry a nation with him like Luther, and, like Luther, leave nothing after him except a name synonymous of discord; whereas, Catholic bishops and priests know, as Burke says, that they are "bound by the authority of their whole Church in all times and in all countries," and if it is true that their influence extends beyond their churches, and that as beings of flesh and blood they may be carried away by their feelings, where, on the other hand, are men subject to such restraints, and where are errors, unapproachable by human laws, so severely punished?

The conviction that the Catholic Church is the coming peacemaker of the civilised world is steadily gaining ground. It is impossible to over-estimate the effect produced by the Encyclicals of Leo XIII. It is true that even many Catholics are incapable of sounding the depths of political and social wisdom which lie hid in his pages. For this we require an education similar to his own, and for many generations, in these countries, as well as in the greater part of the civilised world, higher education has been denied to Catholics, except under conditions which are destructive to that Christian philosophy which is the foundation, and animating principle of the teaching of Leo XIII. It surely does not need deep reasoning to arrive at the conclusion

that, if the Pope is right, it will be a boon to mankind when commentators arise capable of introducing the concentrated wisdom enshrined in his majestic instructions, into the minds of simple men.¹ False philosophy is the worst pestilence of the day, and it is brought home to the young as well as to the old, to the poor as well as to the rich. It has this advantage over the truth: it requires no previous training in its professors, for it is simply as they make it. Catholics, on the other hand, are subject, not only to great and eternal principles, but likewise to the wisdom, and the *Magisterium* of the past, and they are unable to teach unless they have first been taught. They can, indeed, meet the errors of the day with the Catechism, and this is enough for the few who are not exposed to temptation, but not for those possessed by the modern feverish desire for knowledge—a passion as fatal in its excesses as it is noble in its origin.

It must not be supposed that I am imputing ignorance either to the Catholic laity or clergy. We know what is essential for ourselves but not enough for those who from without, look to us for help. It is one thing to teach the simple truths of

¹ I do not think it would be difficult to find parallel passages in Burke in support of all the great social principles on which Leo XIII. has set his seal in his recent Encyclical "On the Conditions of Labour."

Faith, and another to leaven an uncongenial world with Christian principles. The Gospel is complete in itself, and lives by its own divine and inherent energy; but it is not so with its mixed secular developments, and these are just the things which the world wishes us to provide for its instruction, and decoration. Men seem to think that the learning of St. Thomas, and of those Benedictines—of whom Gibbon, of all men in the world, asserted “that a single monastery of Benedictines has contributed more to literature than our two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge”¹—requires as little encouragement as the shamrock, the creature of the earth and sun—why, even genius must have meat and drink and some command of money. If as little encouragement and assistance had been given to Michael Angelo and Raphael as has been dealt out to Irish genius, we should have heard little about them.

It is the old and homely story, too often repeated, “We are knocked down, and then we are kicked for falling,” and when the aggressor recovers from his passion, he sees the results, but he has clean forgotten his own share in the catastrophe. It is now nearly forty years since the greatest authority on mental culture in the Empire pub-

¹ *Letters of Atticus*, p. 39.

lished his *Lectures on University Education*¹ and offered to work out his Educational Code, at a very small price indeed, for he only asked for a Charter, a bit of parchment with the Queen's name, and his offer was rejected. Why is it that meteors of the hour: men of the stamp of Huxley, Bain and Herbert Spencer, who have no other foundation for their opinions than their own conceits, are not merely tolerated, but established by law, and imposed upon the minds of the young, while Cardinal Newman is ignored? And yet there is nothing of his own in his book except that far-reaching vision and that grasp of genius which makes the wisdom of all ages subordinate to the present. Seldom has there been a mind more free from what is called sectarian narrowness, a failing which it is the fashion to confine to religious people. I question whether there is any writer, Catholic or Protestant, who is bolder in his speculations. He takes us on his wings like the eagle out of sight of all landmarks, but he always returns to the rock and reminds us that even when he seemed to us to have abandoned it, he always saw his own way back. In those Lectures of Cardinal Newman we have the luminous analysis of the intellectual materials out of which the British mind has been fashioned.

¹ Republished by Cardinal Newman with the title *Idea of a University*.

I do not mean to say that, any more than their climate, it is superior to that of other nations, but whatever its value may be it is the only mind they have got. It is too old to change, indeed it is a great question whether in the natural order there is any change in the mind of a nation which is not the beginning of death.¹ Now this mind, which in the three kingdoms has produced many great men, and worked out many great ideas, has derived its fundamental principles from Christianity, and the whole scope of the Cardinal's argument is to show that, because of her strength and elevation, the Catholic Church can afford to use the wisdom of all minds, still preserving her own integrity. Moreover, although he does not say so, we see in the Cardinal himself, and in those who in his day made Oxford so glorious, an evidence of the fact that the more men believe of the Ancient Truth, the more their minds are akin to the genius of our institutions, and the greater is their influence.

We have all a right to express our feelings concerning the troubles and sorrows of Ireland, and the Catholic can have no diffidence in suggesting remedies which are recommended by the Supreme Authorities of his Church. Those who have seen

¹ "To a people who have been once proud and great, and great because they were proud, a change in the national spirit is the most terrible of all revolutions." (Burke, *Prior's Life*, ii. p. 366.)

the beginning of evils which have now come to maturity, have an additional right to give an opinion. The men who long since denied Higher Education to Catholic Ireland have sown the wind, and we are reaping the whirlwind, and the wonder is that things are not worse. "A great Empire and little minds go very ill together," said Burke, but in secular affairs all uneducated minds are little. When the government of an Empire is in the hands of the people, they are certain to go astray under uneducated leaders, for natural talents and high aspirations without knowledge, can no more make a statesman than they can educate a lawyer, or train a general.

The resistance offered to our demands for Higher Education is a grave and significant instance of the inconsistency of our opponents. We are told that we are enemies of Education, and yet it is precisely what we ask for. We want it, indeed, in our own way, but is there anything strange in this? Is there a single religious body in the world, possessing a shadow of conviction, which will consent to have its young members introduced into life under the direction of its opponents? If it is the unity and world-wide organisation of the Catholic Church which makes people fear us, as if we were blindly banded together like a Secret Society, our appeal is to the history of the

past, which with us is always the law of the present. Is it not true that freedom in all things which are not clearly matters bound up with the fixed law of God—the principle of St. Augustine *in dubiis libertas*, is the characteristic of Catholics; while Dissenters, or a party in the Church of England, unite like one man on some question of political expediency, and become as intolerant of opposition as if it were a question of faith. The fact is, as was evident to Burke, no people can make such use of their individual consciences as Catholics, and if it sometimes makes men slow and cautious, there are times when caution is the highest wisdom, especially in the case of those who are the trustees, and guides of the multitude. The following passage from Bishop Doyle is an illustration of the way in which in the mind of a conscientious Minister of God, the ardour of the patriot is tempered and restrained by a higher law. “For the last ten years,” he writes, “I have been frequently urged by my feelings to discuss in public the rights of the poor; but I was, and still am, withheld from doing so, at any length, by a reasonable dread, that if these rights were known to the mass of the people, labouring under privations often insupportable, such knowledge would be misapplied, and that men taught to distinguish between moral and legal rights, might be led to

violate the latter at any hazard, when freed from the apprehension of offending against the former. I thought it wise to parley, as it were, with error and abuse: to appeal to public policy—to the interest and duty of the Government; directing at the same time the minds of the people to the power which impended over them—to the sources of hope which were discoverable—but above all to those principles of the Christian religion which lead its followers to derive good from evil, and to convert the trials of this life into means of sanctification in the next.”¹

Where except in the Catholic Church shall we find national and patriotic agitators restrained and guided by supernatural principles such as these? It is now more than sixty years since these lines were written, and if our rulers knew how often the Catholic priest, with his own heart on fire at the

¹ This passage occurs in a Tract on the Union, written in 1831, by Patrick Morris, a Newfoundland colonist, and relative of Bishop Doyle. It was addressed to Sir John Newport, Bart., M.P., a notable politician of the day. The writer was a disciple of Edmund Burke, at a time when they were too few; and like his great master he was an example of the union of ardent sympathy with his native land, and an almost passionate admiration for the British Constitution. His pamphlet contains a very powerful vindication of the right of the Irish clergy to take their place in politics, as evidenced by the History of England itself, in Protestant as well as in Catholic times. He was more moderate than O'Connell in his demands—in fact he only asked for Ireland those privileges which were then being dealt out freely to some of the Colonies.

things which he suffers and witnesses, has guided the fierce passions of his fellow-man by the application of these same principles, they would have more confidence in us. The great Bishop of Kildare was known and appreciated by a few wise men in England, and Catholics are now reaping the partial harvest of that wisdom which ought to have borne richer fruits.¹ Perhaps it will be objected that no man's opinions are a guarantee for those of another. This is true when men are the makers and masters of their own principles; but it is not the case with Catholics. There is not a conscientious priest who, granting that he had the wide vision of the great Irish Prelate, would not feel that in similar circumstances he was absolutely bound to adopt the same principles in dealing with his flock.

I hope I shall not be thought fantastic if I put the following imaginary case. If ever a mind and character has been laid bare for the inspection of his countrymen it is that of Cardinal Newman. They know him in his life of ninety years better than they know even Dr. Johnson. Suppose then that guided by those Catholic political principles from

¹ I believe Bishop Doyle's Examination in 1832 before the House of Lords, was one of the most triumphant victories of truth over prejudice which has been won in this country. It is said that a brother peer meeting the Duke of Wellington in the lobby of the House, said: "Well, Duke, I hear you are examining Doyle." "No," was the reply, "Doyle is examining us."

which all that is good in the British Constitution draws its life, and which in his case were the same at Oxford, Dublin, and Edgbaston, he had taken to the career of the statesman, and that the management of Ireland had been entrusted to him. His writings, that ocean into which all rivers flow, leave no doubt as to the course he would have pursued. Filled with admiration for that British Constitution, of which as a Catholic he writes: "It is one of the greatest of human works. . . . It soars in its majesty far above the opinions of men, and will be a marvel, almost a portent, to the end of time";¹ he would have dealt with the Irish according to the principles of that Constitution, and convinced that people, at once so quick-witted and reflective, that because of the depths of its foundations, it can afford to give more liberty than any Republican institution in modern times.² The man who has changed the whole current of English thought, would have worked still greater wonders in the more congenial atmosphere of Ireland. He would have taught that political philosophy which is the bond between all men because it is the universal property of all; and proved that the

¹ *Present Position of Catholics*, p. 25.

² I have had this acknowledgment made to me spontaneously by an Irish labourer in London, who had been long a resident in Republican America.

Catholic religion is of all others the best suited to preserve the unity of this complex Empire, which derives its strength from its Christian traditions. When people say that Protestantism is the religion of the land, what meaning can they attach to their words, when no one, as Burke observes, knows what Protestantism means? It is from Christian affirmations not from Protestant denials, that society in these countries draws its life; and all that is positive has been the gift of the religion of Alfred, St. Edward, and Blessed Thomas More. Again, I remind the reader that in 1852, at the invitation of the Sovereign Pontiff, Cardinal Newman offered his genius, and the accumulated treasures of his mind to the service of Ireland, as President of the Catholic University, and the State rejected his offer in subservience to the sectarian insanity of that small minority to which for centuries the interests of Ireland have been sacrificed.

Had our rulers been wise in time, and given to Cardinal Newman that confidence and support which the Protestant world now acknowledges was his due, things would be very different in Ireland. In spite of opposition, she has done great things in her primary schools, but it is not in such nurseries that statesmen and philosophers can be reared; and if the leaders of a people, from first to last, are compelled to learn merely from experience,

mistakes are inevitable before their wisdom is matured.

The political afflictions of Ireland are manifest to the world, but they are not the only evils produced by that false policy which for centuries has kept a Catholic people in swaddling clothes. Her literature is a reproach, not to her own people, but to those who deliberately have stifled its development. It is to the fostering influence as well as to the generosity of Cardinal Newman, that we owe the Lectures and Works of O'Curry, perhaps the greatest archæologist of the century. Without doubt ere long the Catholic University would also have trained an historian, and given us a view of Ireland of a very different stamp from those superficial histories written for political purposes, and those sensational romances still more pernicious, which keep alive the impression that the country has had no life save that which comes of hate—whereas to a Christian philosopher like M. de Beaumont her history is a record of a conflict and a victory the most romantic and sublime that the world has ever witnessed—invisible indeed to the materialist, and gradual, but when did matter ever comprehend spirit, or when was widespread moral victory instantaneous? Educate Catholic Ireland in the principles which Cardinal Newman has laid down, and the next generation will see her the most peace-

ful and contented nation in Europe. Her people are romantic and idealistic, perhaps to excess, but you must take them as they are. Give them freedom and fair play in the wide domain of intellectual enterprise, and so long as they have a roof to cover them, and the necessities of life, you will go a great way in making them patient under the many humiliations of their poverty. There is only one way in which Ireland can be subdued, and that is by giving her an equal and unadulterated share in the British Constitution, and this she can never be said to have, until her religion has that liberty and support which is granted to the Dissenters of England, and the Presbyterians of Scotland: denial of rights, no matter how gracefully it may be done, is always hostility and persecution. Then, and not till then, can we hope to see that which for a short time was partially fulfilled in the lifetime of Edmund Burke, when in 1775, in his memorable speech "On Conciliation with America," he could say: "The benefit of English laws and liberties, I confess, was not at first extended to *all* Ireland. Mark the consequence. English authority and English liberties had exactly the same boundaries. Your standard could never be advanced an inch before your privileges. . . . It was not English arms, but the English Constitution, which conquered Ireland.

. . . This has made Ireland the great and flourishing kingdom that it is; and, from a disgrace and a burthen intolerable to this nation, has rendered her a principal part of our strength and our ornament.”¹ His arguments for America in the end were triumphant, but not until they were *three years too late*.

Great Britain and her offspring and Colonies all over the world are at least two hundred years ahead of other nations in experience of modern constitutional liberty, and from her political history, with its successes and failures, other discontented and aspiring countries ought to learn practical wisdom. If she at length solves the problem of establishing peace between Religious Authority and Civil Freedom, her triumph will inaugurate a new era, and help towards the restoration of that Christian Commonwealth whose life is still the life of the civilised world, in spite of the assaults of Luther and Voltaire. If, as is proved by her marvellous expansion, everywhere except in Ireland, there is more liberty in the British Empire than under any other government, it is because her Constitution, and the literature which gives it its life and interpretation, have retained so much of their old Catholic spirit. Cardinal New-

¹ *Works*, Payne's Ed., vol. i. p. 202. Sir John Davies tells us that “the mere Irish were not admitted to the benefits of the laws of England until they had purchased charters of denization”; and it is needless to say that at no period of their history was this an easy matter.

man has made many statements calculated to astonish his countrymen, but none perhaps surprised them more, at the time it was made, than the proposition that "the religion which forbids private judgment in matters of revelation is historically more tolerant than the religions which uphold it."¹ But the same truth was manifest to Edmund Burke, as indeed it must now be to every uncontroversial reader of history. In his "Tracts on the Popery Laws" he observes: "Religion, to have any force on men's understanding—indeed, to exist at all—must be supposed paramount to laws, and independent for its substance upon any human institution. Else it would be the absurdest thing in the world, an acknowledged cheat. Religion, therefore, is not believed because the laws have established it, but it is established because the leading part of the community have previously believed it to be true. . . . But if they once take a religion on the word of the State, they cannot in common sense do so a second time, unless they have some concurrent reason for it. The prejudice in favour of your wisdom is shaken by your change. You confess that you have been wrong, and yet you would pretend to dictate by your sole authority, whereas you disengage the mind by embarrassing it. For why should I prefer your opinion of to-

¹ *Present Position*, p. 222 (4th ed.).

day to your persuasion of yesterday? . . . But when an ancient establishment begins early to persecute an innovation, it stands upon quite other grounds. . . . It puts its own authority, not only of compulsion, but prepossession, the veneration of past age, as well as the activity of the present time, against the opinion only of a private man, or set of men. . . . Commanding to constancy, it does nothing but that of which it sets an example itself. But an opinion at once new and persecuting is a monster, because, on the very instant in which it takes a liberty of change, it does not leave to you even a liberty of perseverance.”¹

It is now nearly a hundred and thirty years since Burke, then a young man, and much more of a Protestant than in his maturer years, made this clear distinction between religious resistance and aggression—between the defensive laws of Catholic countries, and the offensive wars of Protestantism. It is no wonder, therefore, that, filled as he was with passionate love of that liberty which he defined to be freedom from the “despotism of blind and brutal passions, secured by equality of restraint,” which, he observes, is “but another name for justice”—it was no wonder, I repeat, that in his philosophy the liberties of Catholic Ireland found their place, and, as we have seen

¹ *Irish Affairs*, Edited by Matthew Arnold, p. 43, *et seq.*

(p. 152, *n.*), it was for the sake of the State, as well as of religion, that he desired the exaltation of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Protestant Statesman as he was, he saw that this was only to be obtained by perfect equality and unfettered freedom; and in this same letter to Bishop Hussey he says: "Above all, do not listen to any other mode of appointing your bishops than the present, whatever it is—no other elections than those you have—no Castle choices." In another letter to the same, he urges the bishop not to neglect the higher education of the clergy, and on this point, as well as on so many others, he was in advance, not only of his co-religionists, but of many Catholics; "and let me beg of you," he continues, "not to let slip out of your mind the idea of the auxiliary studies and acquirements *which I recommended to you*, to add to the merely professional pursuits of your young clergy."¹

What reasons can be given for the higher education of the clergy, which are not equally strong, and it may be at the present time even stronger in the case of the laity? Perhaps, however, the shortest and the safest line to take is to abandon reasoning which invites opposition, and to keep to authority. And if we do so, who has such claims on our attention as the man to whom even his fiercest

¹ *Correspondence*, iv. pp. 285, 321, 399.

opponents gave the much-abused title of "Prophet," at the right time, that is after the event? When somebody suggested to Mr. Fox that Burke was "a splendid madman"—"whether mad or inspired," is reported to have been the answer, "fate seems to have determined that he shall be an uncommon political prophet," and the same tribute is found in the King of Poland's letter to Burke in 1793.¹ People who, perhaps, are best entitled to form an opinion think that if Burke's principles prevailed there would have been no Rebellion of "'98," or from that day to this any more serious disturbances in Ireland than have arisen in Scotland or Wales. Is there any reason why his principles should not be adopted now? He loved both countries, and gave to each the honour which was its due, and in the present dilemma, without these dispositions, no man can be of any use to either. As we have seen, the two Islands are more than sisters in name. He had no fear that the Catholic religion would ever prove antagonistic to that British Constitution which was mainly its own creation. He used history as the great monitor of nations, not as an agent to "add fuel to civil fury"; and he saw that the Catholic Church has always been the friend of order and the enemy of revolution—a truth which everyone sees, who is willing to see.

¹ Prior's *Life*, ii. p. 375; *Correspondence*, iv. p. 129.

If Christian principles were dead, or even dying, in England and Scotland, the Catholics of Ireland might perhaps lose heart in their claims for Religious Equality. But there is less sign of this now than there was a hundred years ago. It is plain from the writings of Burke that Protestant sympathy with its infidel French offspring, and the wish to cripple France, seemed on the point of extinguishing that dull Christianity which remained in the Protestants of the three Kingdoms. Moreover, the philosophy of Voltaire and Rousseau had not then borne its dead fruits in France and Italy. At this time, however, Burke trusted in the sobriety of the national character, and to a great extent his anticipations have been fulfilled. "Thanks," he says, "to our sullen resistance to innovation; thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character; we still bear the stamp of our fore fathers. We have not, as I conceive, lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century; nor as yet have we subtilised ourselves into savages. We are not the converts of Rousseau; we are not the disciples of Voltaire; Helvetius has made no progress amongst us. Atheists are not our preachers; madmen are not our law-givers. We know that *we* have made no discoveries, and we think that no discoveries are to be made in morality; nor many in the great

principles of government, nor in the ideas of liberty.”¹

They who have studied the interior history of Ireland since 1846 know that her most sagacious leaders have been her Bishops and Priests, and that the Sacraments of the Catholic Church have done more to stifle the Revolution than Coercion Acts and executions, to which poetic and youthful patriotism so easily lends the hues of martyrdom. This is as well known to priests in England and America as in Ireland. If justice had been done at that time to the Religion of Ireland, and support given to Catholic instead of to Godless education, the clergy of Ireland would have been spared a great deal of that rough political work which, even when necessary, with difficulty fits in with the supernatural world and its unearthly principles. The number is daily growing of those who see that the Church can conquer when every earthly influence fails, and restore order, and the balance of power between rich and poor. That Church alone has the secret of inspiring those virtues which make the rich the willing and joyful subjects of a Higher Power, while into the hearts of the poor she infuses that conquering resignation which is the victory of Faith. If we have hopes and anticipations pointing to a future for Ireland different

¹ *Revolution in France*, p. 101, Payne's Ed.

from that of other nations, they are grounded as well on her present circumstances, as on her past traditions. If we say that her very poverty is a promise of life, it is needless to remind the reader of the Divine origin of this idea. The corruption and death that follow wealth are still a long way off, and the evidence at her own door of the miseries which money cannot avert ought to be a great support to those Christian principles which are now, as they have ever been, the one successful antagonist of avarice. Poverty will keep away many bad companions from her Christian homes, which, like the lily are safest amongst thorns, and perhaps, in one spot at least in Europe we may hope to see an image of the past, when "Hearths, Homes, and Altars," were the centres of man's love, and the limit of his ambition here below.

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Confession, the *Epistle to the Christian subjects of the tyrant Coroticus*, and his '*Lorica*,' or 'breast-plate'—wherewith he tests the several data of the various lives and other records. Failing this test, he discusses with judicial discernment statements not inconsistent with the Saint's account of himself, rejecting whatever is at irreconcilable variance therewith. We are glad to see that Father Morris wastes no time over the interminable controversy as to the Saint's Birthplace, which, as a recent critic facetiously observes, favours, if any, the conclusion that he was not born at all. . . . It remains for us to congratulate Father Morris on having given us a portrait hitherto unequalled of the Saint who has shown to so many among us 'the ways of life.'—*The Month*, April, 1888.

"Father Morris's aim is to present to our view the grand personality of the Saint as he lived—the personality, that is, of his character, for we do not notice any description of St. Patrick's bodily presence. He does not waste time by tedious disquisitions on possible birthplaces, nor does he go out of his way to criticise or confute the numerous advocates of this or that view. 'As far as the following pages are concerned,' he says, 'the mystery of St. Patrick's birthplace remains a mystery,' and it is this steady adherence to the main purpose of his book, to reveal St. Patrick to us as he was and as his own writings show him to have been, that gives the volume its unity and completeness."—*The Catholic Press*, 10th March, 1888.

ROMAN MISSION.

"We can but approve Father Morris's demonstration that the Irish Church (like the English) was in the early days in agreement with Rome in all matters of doctrine, differing, indeed, on a few small points of practice which were really nothing more than old Roman customs preserved in Ireland owing to its isolation, while Rome itself had adopted new customs

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in these matters. Those eager persons who deny this lay themselves open to Father Morris's reproach, that they 'do not take the trouble to learn the difference between a creed and a rubric.'"—*The Guardian*, 10th October, 1888.

"Father Morris emphasises the undisputed fact that the Irish Church, at home as well as abroad, through her influence, and through those offices that were entrusted to her missionaries, had shown herself Roman, and also that St. Patrick's sons had become the founders of orthodox churches in foreign lands. Only he who fails to distinguish 'a *Credo* from a rubric' can accuse the old Irish Church of false independence as regards the centre of unity. We urgently recommend Father Morris's excellent work."—*Literarische Rundschau*, 1st November, 1889.

"Father Morris says: 'The Irish Church at home and abroad was proved to be Roman by her works, and by the ecclesiastical offices entrusted to her missionaries.' 'The fact that his (St. Patrick's) sons were founders of orthodox churches in other lands, is cogent evidence that they were orthodox at home' (pp. 25, 26). 'St. Martin was St. Patrick's first spiritual master, and therefore the one most likely to make an impression, and leave his mark on our Saint's soul' (p. 84). 'St. Patrick lived in what is truly called the age of the Doctors of the Church. He was the contemporary of St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine' (p. 90). 'It is certain that St. Patrick was in relations with St. Germanus of Auxerre, and that under the guidance of this Saint he was prepared for his episcopal consecration' (p. 102). And hence Father Morris very properly says: 'The wonder is, that with these great facts of history staring them in the face, Catholic writers should allow themselves to be entrapped and detained by the objections of those professional critics who do not take the trouble to learn the difference between a creed and a rubric' (pp. 24, 25). The truth of this remark is fully borne out by the use made of the Paschal controversy in determining the religion of St. Patrick, and the orthodoxy of the early Irish Church. It was a matter of *discipline*, not of *faith*, a '*rubric*,' not a '*creed*,' and, as we shall just see, is a very strong proof that St. Patrick had

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his mission as well as his doctrines from Rome. Father Morris rightly says that the Irish custom of celebrating Easter, which gave rise to a somewhat bitter and prolonged controversy in the seventh century, was nothing else than a Roman custom introduced by St. Patrick two hundred years before. (See also Smith's *Dict. of Char. Antig.* art. "Easter," *Encyc. Theol.* of Wetzer and Welte and Jungman, *Diss.* 5.) When St. Patrick came to Ireland the eighty-four years' cycle was used at Rome, and it so continued for nearly a hundred years subsequently. That cycle he brought with him to Ireland, and his disciples adhered to it. Now is not this fact of his adopting a Roman custom in preference to others then in use a strong presumptive proof of his submission to Roman authority? And the conduct of his disciples raises this presumption to a certainty. For in the controversy the Irish maintained that they got their faith and their customs from Rome, and the controversy ended by their sending a deputation to Rome to know their spiritual father's will." (*Letters of SS. Columbanus, and Cummian.*)—*Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, March, 1888.

"This same reasoning is quite sufficient to settle the question of St. Patrick's Roman mission. A Roman mission, direct or indirect, is necessarily involved in the Roman Primacy. Now St. Patrick must have established in Ireland that religious system in which he himself was trained by St. Martin—the admired of the Roman Church, and by St. Germain, the Roman Legate; and of that system the Primacy of the Pope was the very corner stone."—*Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, March, 1888.

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